

STARS AND STRIPES®

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SATURDAY, JULY 24, 2004

Free in Deployed Areas

Army adds new drones, vehicles to update plan

Change will increase modernization program cost by \$20B Page 6



Troops hit suspected militants in Fallujah

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AP photos
Above: A man stands in a crater waiting for his son, right, to slide down the wall following a "precision attack" by American forces against a gathering of suspected insurgents in Fallujah, Iraq, on Friday. According to a military statement, the attack occurred at 6:30 a.m. in coordination with the Iraqi government and targeted between 10 and 12 terrorists linked to Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Five Iraqi civilians were wounded, according to the military and hospital officials. Right: A boy stands next to a crater left by a rocket after Friday's attack.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Martha Stewart case: A former brokerage assistant who helped Martha Stewart make her fateful stock trade and later emerged as a key government witness was fined \$2,000 but spared both prison and probation Friday for accepting a pay-off during the government's investigation. U.S. District Judge Miriam Goldman Cedarbaum imposed the fine against Douglas Faneuil one week after she sentenced the convicted homebased entrepreneur to five months in prison and five months of home detention for lying to authorities.

Peterson murder trial: Scott Peterson's defense lawyer questioned a witness so fervently about the prosecution's key piece of physical evidence in his murder trial that the judge ordered jurors to leave the courtroom in Redwood City, Calif. During cross-examination of a criminalist, Mark Geragos suggested police botched the collection process, possibly even contaminating the evidence — a single strand of hair from Peterson's pregnant wife, Laci.

West Nile death: A 57-year-old man died from the mosquito-borne West Nile virus, becoming California's first human fatality from the illness since it arrived in the state last year, officials said.

The man died June 24 and is believed to have contracted the virus in Orange County where he lived, Robert Miller, a spokesman for the California Department of Health Services, said Thursday.

Drowned children case: Andrea Yates, serving a life sentence for drowning her children in a bathtub, is improving at a prison hospital where she was taken after refusing most food and fluid for six weeks, doctors said. "She is much improved and brighter in spirits," Michael Fuller, a psychiatrist treating Yates, said Thursday. "Many of the symptoms that we saw when she was admitted were attributable as much to her physical state as to psychiatric."

Yates

Los Alamos security: Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham on Friday ordered a halt to all DOE operations that use the kind of computer disks reported missing last week at Los Alamos National Laboratory. Under his order, each DOE facility will conduct a stand-down Monday of operations involving so-called controlled removable electronic media, or CREMs, such as classified hard drives or computer disks. Each site is to inventory the items and conduct weekly inventories after that. The announcement comes in the wake of two computer disks that were discovered missing from Los Alamos on July 7. On Thursday, 19 employees were placed on leave pending an investigation.

Western wildfires: Just as firefighters were getting a handle on one large blaze north of Los Angeles, a new wildfire ignited roughly 50 miles to the west, spreading across nearly 800 acres. The latest fires, in Riverside County, forced road closures as it bitterly threatened several homes, said Rick Griggs, a county fire engineer. The fire was 50 percent contained late Thursday night, and firefighters hoped to have it surrounded by Friday morning.

Columbine settlement: A federal appeals court has ruled that parents of a teen killed in the Columbine High School shootings cannot back out of a \$1.6 million settlement



Ukraine mining deaths: A girl cries Thursday over the coffin of her father, one of at least 31 miners killed in an explosion at the Krasnodninskaya mine Monday in the Ukraine. Meanwhile, an aide to Ukraine's president on Friday described the country's mines as the world's most dangerous. On Friday, workers continued pumping nitrogen into the Krasnodninskaya mine to cool the tunnels after the fire so that the search for five miners could get under way.

with the gunman's parents and others.

The 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, in a ruling made available Thursday, rejected arguments by the lawyer for Michael and Vonda Shoels that the family accepted the settlement because of a mistake made at their lawyer's office.

NPR host: Bob Edwards, the former host of "Morning Edition" on National Public Radio, is declining to say whether he will stay with NPR after his book tour ends in two weeks.

"I'm on the road for the next two weeks continuing to do what I am doing, and then I'll do something else," he said in a telephone interview with the Valley News of Lebanon, N.H.

When asked if that something else would include remaining on the air at NPR, Edwards said, "I'd rather not say."

BTK killer: A suspicious letter found in a library drop box last weekend in Wichita, Kan., is being treated as a "possible communication" from the BTK serial killer, police said Thursday.

Lt. Ken Landwehr said the letter has been turned over to the FBI for authentication. No information has been released about contents of the letter, which a library employee found in the drop box at the city's main library on Saturday.

The BTK killer has claimed responsibility for eight deaths in Wichita, the first in 1974. The letters "BTK" stand for "bind, torture, kill."

World

Spain terror attacks: Demolition began Friday on the apartment building where seven suspected Islamic terrorists linked to the March 11 Madrid, Spain, train bombings blew themselves up.

The suspected militants destroyed themselves along with the apartment in the tidy middle class Madrid suburb of Leganes when special forces surrounded them on April 3.

Forensic investigations had sealed the building off as an important crime scene right up to the demolition.

Macedonia ethnic clashes: Hundreds protesting plans to give ethnic Albanians control in a southwestern Macedonian town

hurled Molotov cocktails and rocks at police, who retaliated by firing rubber bullets and tear gas, police said Friday.

The overnight clashes, which left 15 protesters and 24 officers injured, none of them seriously, started after protesters tried to storm governing party offices in Struga, police said.

Seminary porn: A Vatican investigation into the discovery of a vast cache of child pornography at a Roman Catholic seminary in Austria could take all summer, the Archdiocese of Vienna said Friday.

The church probe, which also is examining photos of candidates for the priesthood kissing and fondling each other and their older religious instructors, is likely to last another six weeks, said a spokesman for Cardinal Christoph Schoenborn.

Radical cleric: Lawyers acting for radical Muslim cleric Abu Hamza al-Masri argued Friday in London that he will not receive a fair hearing if sent to the United States to face terrorism charges because President Bush has prejudged any trial by publicly calling him a terrorism supporter.

U.S. officials are seeking al-Masri's extradition on a 10-count indictment accusing him of trying to establish a terrorist training camp in Oregon, being involved in hostage taking in Yemen and funding terrorism training in Afghanistan.

Bosnia mass grave: Forensics experts unearthed the bodies of 51 Bosnian Muslims on Friday from a mass grave believed to contain the remains of up to 300 people killed during the 1992-95 war.

After nine days of exhumations, the Bosnian Muslim Commission for the Search for Missing Persons found the bodies in the mass grave in Bratunac, about 55 miles northeast of Sarajevo, local prosecutor Fatima Hadzibegovic said.

Rwanda rebel: A Ugandan court has charged a Rwandan rebel with killing eight tourists, some from the United States, and a tour guide during a 1999 gorilla-watching trip to a remote African rain forest.

Jean-Paul Bizimana, also known as Xavier Van Damme, 30, was not required to enter a plea in a magistrate court Wednesday, according to court documents. He faces death if convicted in the murders of the two Americans, four Britons, two New Zealanders and the Ugandan guide.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

U.S. launches 'precision attack' on Fallujah

Two Americans killed by roadside bomb in Samarra

By PAUL GARWOOD
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — U.S. forces launched a "precision attack" Friday against a suspected gathering of insurgents outside a house in the volatile city of Fallujah, wounding five civilians, while a roadside bomb killed two American servicemembers near Samarra, the U.S. military said.

Also Friday, firebrand Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, who led an uprising against U.S. forces, condemned militants who have beheaded foreigners in recent months — two days after a decapitated body was found on the banks of the Tigris, accompanied by a severed head in a bag.

A crash Friday between an armored vehicle and a car in Baquba injured two Iraqis, who received medical treatment at a nearby coalition base, U.S. 1st Infantry Division spokesman Maj. Neal O'Brien said.

Baquba police Lt. Ahmed Sadiq said the crash killed two people and wounded three. The discrepancy could not immediately be resolved.

A roadside bomb Friday wounded a bus driver and eight passengers, including a pregnant woman and two children — in Baghdad's northern suburb of Toubchi, police Lt. Rajab Saleh said. The bus driver ignored police warnings not to enter the area, he said.

U.S. forces also assassinated Iraqi Maj. Gen. Salim Ma'jed Blesh, 59, was slain with his neighbor as they headed to a mosque in the northern city of Mosul.

Three children were among the five civilians wounded in Fallujah attack, said Dr. Kamal Al-Ani, a hospital official. Witnesses denied the house was harboring militants.

The attack, like several other re-

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Thursday, 897 U.S. servicemembers have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq in March 2003, according to the Defense Department. Of those, 663 died as a result of hostile action and 234 died of nonhostile causes.

The British military has reported 60 deaths: Italy, 18; Spain, eight; Bulgaria and Poland, six each; Ukraine, four; Slovakia, three; Thailand, two; Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia and the Netherlands have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 759 U.S. servicemembers have died — 554 as a result of hostile action and 205 of non-hostile causes.

The latest deaths reported by U.S. Central Command:

■ No deaths reported.

The latest identifications reported by the Department of Defense:

■ Army Pfc. Nicholas H. Blodgett, 21, Wyoming, Mich.; killed Wednesday by an explosive in Duluth, Iraq, assigned to the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, Schweinfurt, Germany.

■ Army Spc. Danny B. Daniels II, 23, Varney, W.Va.; killed Tuesday in a hostile attack in Baghdad; assigned to the 630th Military Police Company, 793rd Military Police Battalion, 89th Military Police Brigade, Bamberg, Germany.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Mark E. Engel, 21, Centennial, Colo.; died Wednesday at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio of wounds received July 6 in Iraq's Anbar province; assigned to 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

cent strikes in Fallujah, was conducted in coordination with the Iraqi government, and it targeted 10-12 terrorists linked to Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the military said.

Al-Zarqawi has claimed responsibility for a series of car bombings and beheadings of foreigners in Iraq in recent months.

"The anti-Iraqi forces were struck while in the courtyard of a house; the house was left intact," the statement said.

Al-Ani said the U.S. warplane fired a missile that landed in the garden of a house in the Jubail neighborhood in southern Fallujah.

Associated Press Television News video showed a huge crater beside the house.

"When we sleeping in the morning when a U.S. missile hit our

house," Saddam Jassim said as he and his brother cleared debris.

"We have nothing to do with the resistance or al-Zarqawi. These are pretexts used by the U.S. military to terrorize the people in Fallujah because U.S. soldiers are unable to face the insurgents."

Marines pulled back from Fallujah — a focal point of resistance — after besieging it for three weeks in April. Since then, the military has used missile attacks and airstrikes against potential targets, and Friday's strike was the seventh in about a month.

The roadside bombing south of Samarra that killed the two Americans also wounded another servicemember, a military official said on condition of anonymity. The city, 60 miles north of Baghdad, was the scene of battles this week that killed four Iraqis and wounded five.

The American deaths raised the U.S. toll in Iraq since the beginning of the war to 902, according to an Associated Press count.

Leading prayers at the Kufa mosque south of Baghdad for the first time in two months, al-Sadr criticized the insurgents who have been killed at least three times since April. The killings of citizens from the United States, South



Radii Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr is escorted by followers Friday after he addressed worshippers at Friday prayers in the Iraqi city of Kufa, Iraq. In his sermon, al-Sadr condemned the beheading of hostages, saying it was illegal in Islamic law.

Korea and Bulgaria were mostly claimed by Sunni Muslims — rivals of al-Sadr's Shiite faction.

"We condemn what some people are doing regarding the beheading of prisoners, and it is illegal according to Islamic law," al-Sadr said. "Anybody doing this is a criminal and we will punish him according to Islamic law."

Al-Sadr led a roughly two-month uprising against U.S. forces in Shiite-dominated areas across Iraq beginning in April. On-and-off battles between U.S. troops and al-Sadr's al-Mahdi militia left hundreds of people dead before a cease-fire in June.

Kenya urged its citizens to get out of Iraq. On Friday, Kenyan government spokesman Alfred Mutua said it has appealed to KGL to leave immediately to meet the demands of the captors.

"We don't have troops in Iraq, we don't have companies there, so all we can do is urge the company to leave the country," Mutua said. "The life of any Kenyan is worth a lot to us."

Kidnappings have further complicated Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's efforts to persuade reluctant nations to join the coalition and send troops.

Van-tank collision leaves 9 Iraqi civilians dead near Baghdad

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A van carrying Iraqi civilians collided with a U.S. tank near Baghdad, killing nine people and injuring 10, the U.S. military said Friday.

The accident occurred about 10 p.m. Thursday when the van was trying to pass another vehicle and collided with the tank, said Spc. Justin McCue, a press offi-

cial of the U.S.-led military coalition, adding that there were no U.S. or coalition casualties.

Iraqis gave a slightly different account of the crash.

Iraqi police Capt. Adnan Salih said nine people were killed and 18 injured when the tank collided with the vehicle in Tarmiyah, 30 miles north of Baghdad.

The dead included four men, four

women and one child — all of whom attended a wedding party in Tarmiyah, Salih said.

Footage taken by Associated Press Television News showed the twisted wreckage of a minibus and several bodies of accident victims covered by blankets. A child's orange dress was found amid the wreckage and pools of blood covered the road.

U.S. forces and Iraqi police surrounded the crash site.

An unidentified witness, who said he was a passenger, told APTN the vehicle was carrying 12 people from the same family when the tank crashed into it.

"They were in a wedding party on their way from Tarmiyah to Baghdad... [when] an American armored vehicle hit them and left," the man said.

Car bomb wounds at least one GI in Afghanistan

BY NOOR KHAN
The Associated Press

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — A remote-controlled bomb tore through an Afghan street Friday as a U.S. military convoy passed, wounding at least one U.S. soldier, the American military said. But Afghan officials said the blast left four blood-covered U.S. soldiers lying in the road.

A purported Taliban spokesman claimed responsibility for the attack in the city of Kandahar, one of several reported across southern Afghanistan on Friday and late Thursday.

Violence in Afghanistan this year has killed more than 600 people, including soldiers, international workers and civilians.

The U.S. military said in a statement that a roadside bomb caused the blast. It said the wounded soldier, whose name wasn't released, was in stable condition and awaiting evacuation to Germany's Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. It said the attack damaged the vehicle in which he was traveling.

Afghan police and government officials said the bomb appeared to be hidden in a taxi on the side of the road.

"When our forces reached the scene of the explosion, they saw four American soldiers lying on



An Afghan soldier guards the area where a powerful car bomb exploded on Friday in Kandahar, Afghanistan. The bomb exploded while a U.S. military convoy was passing, wounding at least one American soldier.

the road covered in blood. They were seriously wounded," said the deputy police chief of Kandahar province, Gen. Salim Khan.

Khalid Pashun, a spokesman for Kandahar's governor, also said four soldiers were wounded,

as did another policeman at the scene, Tor Jan, and several Afghan witnesses.

It was not immediately possible to clarify the discrepancy between their account and the U.S. military's.

A purported Taliban spokesman, Abdul Hakim Latifi, claimed responsibility for the bombing.

"We carried out the attack on the U.S. forces," he said in a satellite phone call to The Associated

Press from an undisclosed location. "We have said it again and again that we will fight jihad against U.S. forces, their international allies and their Afghan supporters."

Latifi has contacted AP and other news organizations with Taliban statements in the past. It is impossible, however, to verify his statements independently.

About 60 U.S. soldiers and more than 100 Afghan security forces cordoned off the area, a busy road to the U.S. base to the center of town, warning journalists not to take pictures. The charred remains of a car, apparently a taxi, could be seen.

U.S. soldiers with sniffer dogs were searching at least six men who'd been made to sit on the ground, their hands raised in the air. Khan said authorities believed the bomb was set off by remote control, since no body was found in the wreckage.

Meanwhile, suspected Taliban rebels opened fire on Afghan government troops and election workers in two separate attacks in Helmand province, which borders Kandahar. The attacks sparked shootouts that left four fighters dead, said Hajj Mohammad Waili, a spokesman for the Helmand governor.

85,000 cases of water recalled in Afghanistan

BY JON R. ANDERSON
Stars and Stripes

Army officials have recalled 85,000 cases of bottled water in Afghanistan after higher than normal levels of contaminants were detected, according to a message sent to the troops.

The Army's message was sent to a Marine contingent at Kandahar Airfield in southern Afghanistan. Top Marine commanders confirmed the recall.

The blue-and-white 500-milliliter bottles are common throughout Kandahar, where daily temperatures soar above 100 degrees.

Army officials in Afghanistan are trying to determine what contaminated the water, which was distributed in the Kandahar region. They downplayed concerns, describing the recall as a "precautionary measure."

"A recent stock of Arwa water that we tested indicated that it had a level of contaminants that is higher than the accepted standard," said Maj. Stacy Bathrick, a spokeswoman for the main U.S. hub at Bagram air base. "The fact that the Arwa water is being recalled is evidence that our system of testing water works."

In a recent random check of the bottled water, the Army found higher-than-normal levels of tritium radionuclides, Bathrick said in an e-mail response.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Web

site, tritium is produced naturally in the upper atmosphere where cosmic rays strike air molecules. Tritium also is produced during nuclear weapons explosions or as a by-product in reactors producing electricity.

Bathrick added the water does not pose an "immediate health risk." There have been no reports of soldiers getting sick from drinking the water, she said.

Exposure to tritium increases the risk of developing cancer, according to the EPA site. However, tritium is one of the least dangerous radionuclides because it emits very weak radiation and leaves the body relatively quickly.

"As a precautionary measure, we have recalled the Arwa bottled water we distributed and are keeping bottles of Arwa water here shelved until we complete analysis of the entire lot of Arwa bottled water."

Bathrick declined to elaborate on the contamination. But she said the Army has no concern that the water may have been tampered with prior to being shipped to the troops.

"We are aware of a report there was a water sample that tested positive for something. It was all part of a routine and normal testing procedure done on sustenance to ensure the integrity of food chain for our deployed troops," said Jack Hooper, spokesman for the Defense Logistics Agency.



The Army is recalling about 85,000 cases of Arwa bottled water, heading for Kandahar, after tests revealed higher than normal levels of contaminants.

The DLA has an approved list of all food and drink suppliers around the world, and commands can only make buys from that list, Hooper said.

"I just want to say there is no shortage of bottled water in that region and no shortage of approved suppliers in that region," Hooper said.

The Arwa is a product of the Coca-Cola Company and is bottled in Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Bahrain, according to Gurtay Kipcak, public affairs director for the company's Middle East and Eurasia division.

"I have been checking with regional managers," Kipcak said by phone Friday. "We were not contacted about this problem."

More information on tritium can be found on the EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/radiation/radionuclides/tritium.htm

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Gitmo review panels to be held next week

BY IAN JAMES
The Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Hundreds of detainees suspected of terrorist ties will get their first formal opportunity to argue for their freedom at review panels that the U.S. military plans to convene next week at its base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The military is preparing hearing rooms inside trailers at the seaside prison of Camp Delta and has appointed three military officers to sit on the first panel, spokeswoman Navy Cmdr. Beci Brenton said Friday.

"They're standing by ready to execute when they're told to," Brenton said by phone from the Pentagon. "The aim is to conduct the first tribunal next week."

Human rights lawyers criticize the process as a sham, saying the three military officers assigned to hear cases can't be considered impartial and that each detainee should be allowed a lawyer. Under the rules, each detainee will be assigned a military officer to be a "personal representative" before the panel.

The military says members of the panels — which the Pentagon calls Combatant Status Review Tribunals — will be neutral and that detainees will be freed if the panels determine they are being wrongly held.

The names of both panel members and detainees who appear be-

fore them will not be made public, Brenton said.

Nearly 600 prisoners from more than 40 countries are held at the U.S. base in eastern Cuba, some since January 2002. Only a handful who have been charged have been allowed lawyers. Most have had no contact with the outside world except letters from home censored by the military.

The Guantanamo detainees were set up shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled June 28 that the detainees have a right to bring challenges before U.S. civilian courts.

Human rights lawyers have since filed lawsuits for dozens of detainees in U.S. federal court. The most recent, for three from Bahrain, was filed Thursday in Washington, said New York lawyer Joshua Colangelo-Bryan.

The Pentagon has said the panels will review the detainees' charges by showing that each prisoner's case has been reviewed.

The process, allowing detainees to challenge their U.S.-designated status as "enemy combatants," is separate from military tribunals to try detainees, which the Pentagon calls commissions.

So far only four detainees have been charged, and the U.S. government has designated a total of 15 as eligible for trial. It's unclear how soon trials could begin.

Navy Secretary Gordon England has said the review panels could conclude within four months.

Search under way after vessel hits USS Kennedy

BY KENDRA HELMER
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Navy is continuing to search for survivors from a small boat that collided with the USS John F. Kennedy in the Persian Gulf on Thursday.

The aircraft carrier was conducting night-flight missions in support of operations in Iraq when a dhow struck its starboard side at about 10:20 p.m., said Cmdr. Jamie Graybeal, 5th Fleet spokesman, in a telephone interview from Manama, Bahrain.

No Kennedy personnel were injured, and Graybeal said an investigation is under way that may determine how the dhow managed to approach the carrier.

Graybeal said that at this time there is nothing to indicate the incident is anything more than an accident.

The carrier and HMS Somerset, a British warship, launched helicopters and small boats to search for dhow crewmembers. Also assisting are Navy P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft from Bahrain.

A debris field has been located, but no survivors or remains have been found. Graybeal said he did not know the size of the dhow or how many people may have been aboard.



SHNS photo courtesy of the U.S. Navy

A small dhow collided with the USS John F. Kennedy on Thursday night as the carrier was conducting night-flight missions in support of operations in Iraq. The incident appears to be an accident, a 5th Fleet spokesman said. The Navy is searching for survivors from the vessel.

The Kennedy, deployed to the U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility under the command of the 5th Fleet, arrived in the gulf earlier this month. The Mayport, Fla.-based carrier flew its first operational mission in the gulf July 10, Graybeal said.

In October 2000, 17 sailors died after suicide attackers detonated explosives on a small boat they had brought alongside the USS Cole destroyer as it refueled in the Yemeni port of Aden.

E-mail Kendra Helmer at: helmerk@ml.eastripes.osd.mil

GAO: Army bungled multibillion-dollar Iraq support contract

BY MATT KELLEY
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Army botched planning and management of the multibillion-dollar contract to provide food and other services to troops in Iraq, congressional investigators said.

Investigators from the Government Accountability Office found a "pattern of contractor management problems" which led to cost disputes between the Pentagon and the contractor, Houston-based Halliburton. The GAO investigators also criticized Halliburton's staffing and accounting.

So far, the military has agreed to pay Halliburton more than \$5 billion on the contract in question.

Separate federal investigations are looking into whether Halliburton overcharged the Army for fuel and meals and allegations that former Halliburton workers may have taken bribes from a Kuwaiti subcontractor.

Separately, a report from congressional Democrats said Halliburton charged the government

\$2.68 per gallon to import gasoline to Iraq from Kuwait, while a government agency did the same work for \$1.57 a gallon. That cost the government an extra \$166.5 million, the Democrats' report said.

Halliburton spokesman Wendy Hall said price comparisons were unfair because the terms of the contracts probably were different.

The company has not obtained a copy of the government arrangement cited in the Democrats' report, Hall said.

The Democrats' report said Halliburton hired a Kuwaiti company to both buy the gas as a middleman and transport it into Iraq, while the Defense Energy Support Center bought the gasoline directly and hired the company only to transport the fuel.

Halliburton has said Kuwait's government-controlled oil company would sell gasoline only through the firm, named Altamnia.

Halliburton, which Vice President Dick Cheney headed from 1995 until 2000, has said it did the best it could in the chaos of war.

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Army restructures modernization program

BY RENAE MERLE
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Army outlined Thursday a restructuring of its modernization program, the Future Combat System, increasing the cost by \$20 billion to \$25 billion, accelerating the deployment of key technology and adding new models of drones and ground vehicles.

The program, critical to the Army's transformation into a lighter, more mobile force, was originally expected to cost about \$92 billion. Boeing Co. and Science Applications International Corp. are jointly managing the project.

The program aims to connect soldiers to a mobile and wireless network to assist them in battlefield decisions. It would replace the current fleet of ground vehicles with a mix of high-tech

Program boosted by \$20B; experimental unit will be testing technology in 2008

manned and unmanned ground and aerial vehicles.

The massive modernization effort has been dogged by questions about its complexity and the pace of progress on the futuristic drones and ground vehicles. The high-tech renovation will require more than 30 million lines of software code. The program "has so many moving pieces and they are so technically challenging it would be almost unbelievable to suggest it could stay on its original schedule," said Loren Thompson, defense consultant and chief operating officer of the Lexington Institute, a suburban think tank.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker acknowledged the challenges Wednesday, telling Congress that the originally structured program had only a 28 percent chance of success. The revisions boost its chances to more than 70 percent, he said.

Under the restructuring, the military will delay deployment of the first fully modernized unit, which will include about 2,500 soldiers, for two years until 2014. Instead the Army will create an experimental unit in 2008 to begin testing some of the technology, including missiles stored in remote locations that a soldier could deploy through the network.

The cost increase will cover several changes to the program, including adding an armed unmanned robotic vehicle, a recovery and maintenance vehicle, two classes of unmanned aerial vehicles and an intelligent munitions system, also known as a "smart mine," which a soldier could turn on and off remotely or program to deactivate in 30 days.

"This is a very prudent and logical progression" of the program, said Army Maj. Gen. Joseph Yakovac Jr., military deputy to the assistant secretary for acquisition. Some changes were prompted by experiences in the Iraq war, Army officials said. The Army

will equip all eight manned vehicles in the program with self-protection technology for attacking incoming missiles. The previous plan called for the technology to be applied only to vehicles that would operate at the front. The change is an acknowledgment that the boundaries of the traditional battlefield no longer exist, Army officials said.

Chicago-based Boeing, which serves as the lead manager of the program, said the changes were good news. "Now we have to show the flexibility to get these new capabilities to our soldiers even faster," Dennis Mullenburg, Boeing's vice president and general manager of the project, said in a statement.

The 2005 defense appropriations bill includes \$2.9 billion for the program, \$1.2 billion more than this year, but \$268 million less than was requested.



PHOTOS BY MINDY CAMPBELL/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Members of the 417th Base Support Battalion community gathered Wednesday to honor Pfc. Torry D. Harris, 12th Chemical Company in Kitzingen, Germany, who died last week in Tikrit, Iraq. Right: Spc. Jessica Slater, 12th Chemical Company, salutes Harris after the service.



2/6 Cavalry returns to Illesheim

BY STEVE LIEWER
Stars and Stripes

Thirteen months after casting its colors in Germany, the reconstituted 2nd Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment is returning next week to its home field with a hangar-full of new toys.

The squadron's 200-plus members have spent the last year at Fort Hood, Texas, training in the Army's most advanced attack helicopter, the AH-64 Apache Longbow. The Longbows boast a more advanced radar and firing system than the A-model Apaches they replace.

Many soldiers and their families arrived by bus Friday at Illesheim Army Airfield, welcomed by sponsors from their sister unit, the 6th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment. Two years ago, the 6/6 Cavalry families themselves arrived from Fort Hood, the first Europe-based unit to get the Longbows.

Pilots with the 2/6 Cavalry will arrive with the unit's 22 new helicopters early next week.

The 2/6 Cavalry cast its colors at Illesheim June 26, 2003, six weeks after the unit returned from an eight-month tour in Kuwait and Iraq. After months of training in the Kuwaiti desert, they crossed the border during the invasion of Iraq and supported the 3rd Infantry Division's attack on Baghdad through the Karbala gap during the early days of the war.

The unit unfurled its flag Sept. 12, 2003, at Fort Hood, near the beginning of a year of intensive Longbow training.

Kitzingen remembers soldier as 'friend for life'

Memorial service held for 1st Infantry Division GI who died in Tikrit

BY STEVE LIEWER
Stars and Stripes

More than once in Iraq, Pfc. Torry Harris offered his shoulder to a soldier in need or helped a buddy who needed to boost his physical training scores.

Now he's gone. Harris, 21, of the 1st Infantry Division's 12th Chemical Company, died July 13 in Tikrit. The Army has not disclosed any information about the circumstances of his death, other than to say he died of "non-combat related injuries."

Regardless, about 70 friends and fellow soldiers gathered Wednesday in a chapel at the unit's home base in Kitzingen, Germany, to mourn him.

"What stands out the most to me about this young soldier," said

Sgt. 1st Class Eric McQueen, the 12th Chemical's rear detachment commander, "was his virtue and unharmed potential we will never have the opportunity to witness again."

Harris grew up on Chicago's South Side. Last summer he enlisted in the Illinois National Guard, then shifted to active-duty status early this year. He arrived at the 12th Chemical's base in Kitzingen on Feb. 9, just as his unit was deploying to Iraq.

Harris stayed behind in Europe for two months, mastering the many skills needed for his combat deployment. He joined his unit at Camp Speicher in Tikrit on April 13. In the three months before he died, Harris served mostly as a 50-caliber machine gunner pulling guard duty. But

he did join in two missions as part of 12th Chemical's Toxic Industrial Chemical and Material Team.

He had only a short time to make his mark as a soldier, but one of his closest friends said she will always remember his kindness and good cheer.

"Pfc. Harris was always one to try to lift your spirits when you were down," Spc. Jessica Slater — an Iraq "battle buddy" — said tearfully at his memorial.

"He had a great heart. Once you were a friend, you were a friend for life."

Harris is survived by his mother, Linda Calhoun, and three sisters: Laurie, 20, and Markita and Keisha, both 17.

E-mail Steve Liewer at: liewers@mail.estripes.osd.mil



Pfc. Torry D. Harris

E-mail Steve Liewer at: liewers@mail.estripes.osd.mil



War Is Tough on Families

Military life has enough challenges without worrying about how your loved ones will contact you... especially during times of conflict. I know, because I grew up in a military family and served as a Navy Admiral.

You can count on the American Red Cross to help you wherever you go. Whether you're at sea, or on an installation, we can help your loved ones back home get messages to you, or from you, in case of emergency. We can also help you through counseling and other needed assistance.

The Red Cross was there for my family, and we'll be there for yours. In fact, we support thousands of military families each year.

For more information, or to learn how you can help, please contact your local Red Cross or visit www.redcross.org. Thank you.



Marsha Evans
President and CEO, American Red Cross
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)



**American
Red Cross**

Together, we can save a life

MILITARY UPDATE

Tom Philpott

Pentagon floats alternatives to congressional SBP reform

As House-Senate conferees prepare to deliberate differences in their separate plans for phasing out a sharp drop in military survivor benefits that occurs at age 62, the Bush administration says it has some "better alternatives" to improving the Survivor Benefit Plan.

Rather than phase out the age-62 drop in benefits, Congress should defer it "until the surviving spouse reaches full retirement age" under Social Security, Defense Department officials argue. That would put off the unpopular reduction in benefits until age 65, age 67 or somewhere in between depending on the surviving spouse's birth year.

Another alternative to phasing out the drop in benefits at 62 — when payments typically fall from 55 percent of covered retired pay down to as low as 35 percent — is to lower SBP premiums, Defense officials suggest. That would make SBP more affordable to enlisted retirees. [About 80 percent of retired officers enroll in SBP versus 65 percent of enlisted retirees.]

Defense officials seek a return to bi-level premiums, as set before 1988, with "substantial

discounts for those with lowest retired pay."

DOD floated these alternatives in a package of "appeal" documents on the 2005 defense bill sent to the Office of Management and Budget and the Senate Armed Services Committee on July 7.

Steve Strobe, director of government relations for the Military Officers Association of America, described the proposal as a last-minute attempt "to sell out the interests of all current and future survivors."

The House, in passing its version of the 2005 defense authorization bill, voted to phase out what's also called the age-62 "offset" within four years.

The Senate too voted to phase out the age-62 deduction, but over 10 years, not four. Benefits would be fully restored, to 55 percent, by October 2014.

The cost of the House plan is estimated at \$2 billion over five years, \$6.8 billion over 10 — roughly three times higher than the Senate plan. That proposal would cost \$700 million over five years, \$2.2 billion over 10.

To comment, write Military Update, P.O. Box 23111, Centerville, VA 20120-1111, e-mail milupdate@aol.com or visit www.militaryupdate.com

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New Ramstein juice bar offers healthy snacks ... and donuts



MARNI MCENTEE/Stars and Stripes

Benjamin Ramos waits while Daniela Coleman makes him a snack at the new Juice and Sport Bar at the Northside Fitness Center on Ramstein Air Base in Germany. An Italian contractor built the snack bar, brought to Ramstein based on customer demand, according to Stephen Selvey, director of fitness and sports for the 435th Services Squadron. The bar serves juices, smoothies, healthy sandwiches, Italian ice cream and coffee. "It's all on the healthy side, except for the donuts and pastries," Selvey said.

Fighter jets collide

ARLINGTON, Ore. — A pair of fighter jets collided in Oregon on Wednesday while conducting a training exercise, killing two reservists and injuring another.

A third crew member survived and was to be released Wednesday evening from the emergency

room at Mid-Columbia Medical Center.

"In some respects, it's very amazing — no broken bones, no abrasions, minor injuries," said Dr. John Jacobson, who treated the unidentified airman.

The jets, both F-18 warplanes, collided over the Columbia River, near Arlington, about 120 miles east of Portland.

Debris from the jets was scattered as far away as Interstate 84, eight miles south of Arlington.

The jets, based at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego, were conducting a low-altitude training exercise from a National Guard base in Portland to a bombing range in Boardman, Ore.

From The Associated Press

Stars and Stripes

Messages of Support

★ TO ALL OF THOSE SERVING: ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE, AND MARINES...AMERICAN, BRITISH AND ALL OTHERS.....GOD BLESS AND PROTECT YOU!!!!!!!

★ To all the troops in the middle east, Thank you all. Keep your head down and your spirits up. Thank you for your sacrifice. I thank you for my children's lives. Stay proud and Strong. I love you all. You are helping more than you realize. Gratefully, Robert B. - "Proud American"

★ Hey Guys and gals just a short note to let you that I'm praying for your safe return. Hold your head up high as a true American hero. Going so far way to defend those who cannot do so themselves. While you're there know in your heart that we have our support. My friends, family and neighbors have started tying yellow ribbons to their yards and cars showing our love and support for all you brave souls. Much love and gratitude for all of you.

★ You are not alone, our thoughts and prayers!!!! are with you. God Bless.

★ We at home support your bravery and efforts! Thank you. You are in our thoughts and prayers. Please come home quickly and safely!

★ To my husband Joshua C. Hey love just wanted to say that I am very proud of you. Everybody says hi and we want you to know that we support you and that we are praying for you. Just remember to always keep your head up, and never give up. I believe God is watching over you. Joshua you are my hero. I can't wait for you to come home..... Thanks to all the American troops out there. You have the support of everybody here in the U.S. We are keeping you in our prayers, come home safe. With Love your wife, Ingrid Curry

★ Pfc. Chris P.: As before we are so very proud of you and the rest of the troops. Mom says Hi and that she loves you and you are in her prayers every night. Take care of yourself so you can care for the wounded. Please keep a clear head and do the best you can. Love you from, Bannie and Mom, Semper Fi, Viet Nam '68/70

Democratic National Convention on AFN

FRANKFURT — Television and radio coverage of the Democratic National Convention begins early Tuesday morning for American Forces Network viewers and listeners living in Europe and the Middle East. For four days next week, AFN-News will provide comprehensive TV coverage, showing three hours each day beginning at 2 a.m. CET, said Ann Mulligan, the director of broadcasting in Europe for AFN. The convention, which will be held in Boston, starts Monday and ends Thursday in Boston.

The nightly feed will feature convention coverage provided by the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), Mulligan said.

AFN-Atlantic will offer network coverage wrap-up reports at 6 a.m. CET from ABC and at noon from CBS on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Unless something changes, there will be no wrap-up report on Wednesday, Mulligan said.

Power Network Radio will also provide coverage, starting at 2 a.m. CET each of those four days.

On the last day of the convention, Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., is expected to formally accept his party's nomination for president.

Stripes' new Pacific general manager

John D. Panasiwicz has accepted the position of general manager for Stars and Stripes' Pacific operations.

Panasiwicz takes over from Robb Grindstad, who accepted the position of associate editor in Stripes' offices in Washington, D.C., in early July.

Panasiwicz has worked in the newspaper industry for nearly 25 years and came to Stripes in 1996 as the circulation manager. He was promoted to circulation director shortly thereafter.

John lives in Japan with his wife, Teresa, and their four children — Erica, 13, Leah, 11, and twins Andrew and Benjamin, 9.

He can be reached at panasiwicz@pstrips.osd.mil.

From staff reports

Slowing traffic down in England

By RON JENSEN

Star and Stripes

RAF MILDENHALL, England — Take... it... slowly. That was the message Friday at RAF Lakenheath and RAF Mildenhall, two bases in England where speed was Public Enemy No. 1.

In a partnership with Suffolk County, the bases set up SID — Speed Indicator Display — at various points where drivers are known to exceed the speed limit. SID's display board greeted drivers within the limit with a smiley face; speeding drivers were met with a frowning face.

Speeders were not given tickets Friday, but they were pulled over, warned and given information about safe driving.

"We want to raise staff speed awareness," said Staff Sgt. Jennifer King of the 100th Security Forces Squadron at RAF Mildenhall.

Airman 1st Class Russell Whitmore, also of the 100th Security Forces Squadron, said, "All we want people to do is pay a little more attention to their speed."

The bases had nearly 500 speeding violations between July 15, 2003, and July 14, 2004. RAF Lakenheath police handed out 291 tickets and RAF Mildenhall 172. Most were for speeders within 1 to 10 mph over the limit, but a few were for drivers exceeding the limit by 16 to 20 mph.

"People get in that zone in their cars and their tunnel vision doesn't include their speedometer," said Whitmore. He said often they don't notice when speed limit on the base changes to a lower speed.



RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

Senior Airman Raymond Castro, 100th Security Forces Squadron, tells a motorist at RAF Mildenhall, England, that he was speeding.

SID is on the roads of Suffolk County each day, said Brian Braine, a county employee who operates the device. It is set up where people have complained of speeding, and usually results in reduced speeds in the area even after SID has packed up and moved away.

"Some people won't learn, but there are a lot of people who take notice," he said.

Michelle Finnerty, communications manager for Suffolk Safe Cam, which operates fixed speed cameras at 450 sites around the county, said SID has been a valuable tool to make people take notice of their speed.

"This method of raising awareness has proved to be effective around the county and particularly with residents of local villages," she said.

The idea of taking SID to the bases began at an on-base safety bazaar, where the device was dis-

played. Talks began and SID made its initial appearance at RAF Lakenheath on Friday morning before moving a few miles down the road to RAF Mildenhall for the afternoon.

Braine said SID can be effective on base because people forget to slow down there after coming off county roads where speed limits are higher.

Senior Airman Raymond Castro of the 100th SFS was breaking the news to fast drivers on Friday near RAF Mildenhall's exit gate. Most accepted the caution in good spirit, he said, but some wanted to argue that they weren't speeding.

SID knew better. King said the goal of cutting down driving speeds is one that benefits everyone, whether they're driving on the base or on county roads.

"We just want everybody to be safe drivers," she said.

E-mail Ron Jensen at jensenr@mail.strips.com

Congress Ks \$417.5 billion for defense

By ALAN FRAM

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress used overwhelming votes to give President George W. Bush a \$417.5 billion measure for defense in a day that highlighted lawmakers' bipartisan approach to the military — and their divisions over many domestic programs.

The Senate approved the Pentagon spending bill 96-0 and the House followed suit by 410-12. The legislation included \$25 billion for the next few months of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and a 7 percent boost for other defense programs.

The ongoing wars and the approaching November elections made the one-sided votes inevitable. Also easing passage were home district projects, including \$4.5 million for research, equipment and construction that Republican Rep. John McHugh claimed for his upstate New York district, and \$1.9 million for the Presidential park in San Francisco, hometown of Democrat House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi.

The bill is the first of the 13 annual spending bills for the government's next budget year, which starts Oct. 1 — to clear the Republican-led Congress. Lawmakers were eager to pass it before going into their six-week recess, which began Friday.

"Our troops will have what they need to do their jobs, and I am pleased that a bipartisan majority in the Congress continues to stand with me to support our military," Bush said of the measure in a written statement.

But lawmakers' summer break was beginning with the rest of the spending bills a long way from finished.

Those measures have been rocked by fights over everything from spending for schools to aid to Saudi Arabia. With a backdrop of record federal deficits that have prompted the Republicans to try raising domestic spending, legislators will face decisions about those measures when they return in September.

In other budget work Thursday:

■ The House approved a \$10 billion military construction measure by 420-1. First, as expected, it dropped an expansion of a housing program for soldiers' families that conservatives said broke budget limits. The Senate has not yet approved its version.

■ The House Appropriations Committee passed a \$90 billion bill financing the Transportation

and Treasury departments after voting 42-16 to give civilian federal workers the same 3.5 percent raise the military received. Bush recommended a 1.5 percent increase for civilians.

■ The same House panel approved a \$92.9 billion bill that cuts funds for NASA, environment and science programs while increasing veterans' health care to \$30.5 billion — still US\$1.3 billion less than veterans' groups want. It rejected separate efforts by Democrats and conservative Republicans to add money for veterans.

■ On that same bill, lawmakers used a voice vote to add more than 1,100 home-district projects to the measure.

■ The defense bill's \$25 billion for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan represented a victory for Congress over Bush, who began the year insisting no extra funds would be needed until after the elections. Under pressure from lawmakers, he requested the money in May, saying he would not need to spend it until autumn. He proposed being able to move the money among Pentagon accounts as he wished.

Instead, the war money will be available when Bush signs the measure into law. He will only be able to shift \$2 billion without Congress' permission.

"The administration has fallen down on the job in budgeting for these wars, and its budget projections simply are not to be trusted," said Sen. Robert Byrd, a West Virginia Democrat.

Administration officials say they expect to have enough money through September by moving money among accounts.

The war funds include money for body armor, reinforced Humvee vehicles and other equipment to train the new armies of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The overall bill has \$1.6 billion less than Bush requested for the Pentagon but nearly \$25 billion over this year's total, excluding money for Iraq and Afghanistan.

It has nearly \$78 billion for weapons purchases, \$3 billion more than Bush requested. Included is more money for Air Force unmanned Predator aerial attack vehicles, Styker combat vehicles for the Army and a B2(X) bomber.

There is \$10 billion for continued work on a national missile defense system. And there is \$100 million for the Air Force to modernize its fleet of mid-air refueling tankers — though House language was dropped requiring 80 of the craft to be purchased from the ailing Boeing Co.

Stars and Stripes

Messages of Support

★ Hi Troopers: I thank my lucky stars for you and all your buddies. God Bless each and everyone of you. We support you, pray for you, and carry our hearts and our minds towards your happy and safe home coming. Please know you are cared for and thought of by many all over this nation, just like the song you are always on our mind, MOM of a son in air force training, NY thanks all of you for defending all of us!

★ Spc. B. Reine: I LOVE and MISS you! Am praying daily for you the unit! Tell everyone a "HI". If anyone sees this, show him since our mail isn't getting here or there. STAY FOCUSED, ENDURE, KEEP THE FAITH! Hugs&Kisses! Your angel, Valerie :-)

★ Hey how are you? We want you and the troops to know that you are in our prayers. Can't wait till you can come home. I'm sure you can't wait either. Take care and stay safe we love you, the Hagemans

★ MY HUSBAND AND I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW HOW PROUD WE ARE OF ALL THE MILITARY. WE THANKED THE RECRUITERS IN OUR TOWN THE OTHER DAY AND TOOK THEM DONUTS TO THEIR OFFICES AS WELL. THE MILITARY

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IS AWE-SOME. THE MEN AND WOMEN SERVING ARE SUCH A BLESSING TO THIS COUNTRY. MAY GOD KEEP HIS HANDS OF PROTECTION AROUND YOU ALL AND BRING YOU HOME SAFELY AND SOON.

★ Your service to defend and protect America is invaluable! Thanks for all your acts of valor that may go unnoticed by the press but not by our God! Helen P. - Birmingham, AL

★ LCPL Josh H. Hi Josh, just want you to know all is well at home. Want you to know you are in our thoughts every minute and we love you and look forward to talking and seeing you again. Love, Mom and Dad

★ Dear troops: Your bravery, willingness, sacrifices, and love for freedom, and our country, is not going unnoticed in my eyes. You all are forces to be reckoned with. Keep up the good work! Matt

★ I just want you to know I'm praying for you and all the troops, I hope this war ends soon so you guys can all get home to see your families...We love you! The Hageman's

IN THE WORLD

Critics: Old tracks factor in Turkey rail crash

BY JAMES C. HELICKE

The Associated Press

MEKECE, Turkey — Critics lashed out at the government Friday for ignoring warnings that old train tracks were not designed to handle a new express train that derailed in northwestern Turkey, killing 37 people and injuring 81 others in one of the country's worst rail disasters.

The cause of the derailment was unclear, but government officials ruled out sabotage. The disaster was a major embarrassment for the government, which dismissed concerns raised about the high-speed train before service was inaugurated last month.

Paramilitary police Friday detained the train's conductor and

his assistant for questioning, a police official told The Associated Press on customary condition of anonymity.

At daybreak, a crane lifted one of at least four flipped cars and loaded it onto a freighter train as railroad workers began repairing the tracks. Engineers came forward after Thursday's accident, saying they had warned the government numerous times that the old tracks along the Istanbul-Ankara line could not handle the new high-speed cars.

A spokesman for Turkey's railroads, who refused to be named, said it was unclear how fast the train was going at the time of the crash. He said the speed limit near the crash site required the

train to slow to 48 mph, from a previous speed limit of 78 mph.

Survivor Muhittin Anik said he went to the restroom five minutes before the crash and noticed that a speed indicator showed the train to be traveling at 85 mph.

Union leaders, opposition politicians and newspapers also said the government neglected warnings its showcase train was too fast for Turkey's antiquated railroad tracks.

"Serial murder," the daily Hurriyet newspaper said. "Express massacre," was the headline in Sabah.

Experts had called on the government to modernize the rail infrastructure before allowing the trains to travel.

Aydin Erel, professor of engineering at Istanbul's Yildiz Technical University, said he warned the government as recently as July 14 that the tracks were not up to standard. "Our infrastructure was not suitable for such speed," Erel said. "Our warnings were ignored."

The state-run rail authority rejected the criticism and insisted the lines were safe.

At least four cars overturned Thursday evening near the small, rural village of Mekece, with most of the damage in two cars that crashed into each other.

Bodies lay near the tracks as searchers climbed on the overturned cars looking for survivors. Darkness hampered rescue operations, with soldiers searching

the wreckage and treating the injured by flashlight.

"The train was a little fast going around the curves," said injured passenger Namik Kemal Ozden, lying in his hospital bed with his face bandaged. "There were vibrations. My cousin was sitting next to me; we hugged each other. The windows broke and we fell to one side. We could only understand what happened once we got out."

The crash marked a setback for Turkey's efforts to modernize its outdated rail services and for the government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who launched the high-speed line. Erdogan canceled a trip to Bosnia and traveled to the disaster area by helicopter, where he faced angry survivors.

EU's Solana vows a role in Mideast peace

BY STEVE WEIZMAN

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana wound up a stormy two-day visit to Israel on Friday saying Europe will play a role in Mideast peacemaking — whether Israel likes it or not.

Infuriated by the European Union's support for a U.N. General Assembly resolution calling for the demolition of Israel's West Bank barrier, Israeli officials have been blasting Brussels and giving Solana a frosty reception.

A scheduled meeting between Solana and Vice Premier Ehud Olmert was canceled at the request of the Foreign Ministry. Other talks took place "in the shadow of Europe's" wife, Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom said.

In a meeting with Solana on Thursday, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said the Europeans' action would make it difficult for Israel to involve the EU in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Even dovish opposition leader Shimon Peres, a welcome visitor to European capitals, criticized the EU's opposition to the barrier, which Israel says is essential to keep Palestinian bombers and gunmen from launching attacks into Israel.

"I think that a country that has no experienced terror cannot judge a country that did experience it," Peres told reporters after meeting Solana on Friday.

Solana was unfazed, saying the EU has strategic interests in the Middle East and would not allow itself to be frozen out of peace efforts.

Europe "is a very important international power and is going to play a role whether you like it or not," he said, speaking to Israeli media.

Palestinian peace negotiator Saeb Erekat said the Europeans must take a central place in peacemaking.

"I don't see how there can be a peace process without the EU," he said.



The Old Bridge connected the two sides of Mostar since the 16th century, until it was destroyed after being bombed by Bosnian Croat forces in 1993. Many countries have donated money and experts to rebuild the bridge from parts pulled out from the bottom of the river.

Bosnia reopens bridge

BY MIRSAID BEHRAM

The Associated Press

MOSTAR, Bosnia-Herzegovina — For centuries, Mostar's stone bridge was an icon of ethnic diversity. Then, when shelling destroyed it in 1993, the ancient span came to symbolize the senseless brutality of Bosnia's war.

On Friday, Britain's Prince Charles and other foreign dignitaries gathered to reopen the bridge over the Neretva River, and many Bosnians hoped it would help reunite Muslims and Croats in this picturesque southern town.

"It's a symbol of hope for the future, which I passionately believe will see Bosnia-Herzegovina as a full member of the family of the European Union," said Chris Patton, the EU's external affairs commissioner.

Festivities began early Friday with a performance of brass bands from Croatia and Turkey. The bridge, built under the Turkish Ottoman empire, was destroyed by Bosnian Croat forces.

The area around the bridge

was off-limits to most Mostar citizens, who watched the daylong festivities on television at home. Security was tight, with more than 2,300 police officers mobilized to seal off the heart of the city. Helicopters patrolled overhead and police divers watched the river.

Former U.N. special envoy Elisabeth Rehn, who spent several years in Bosnia after the 1992-1995 war, returned for Friday's ceremony. "Already on the road from Sarajevo to Mostar, it becomes clear how much everything has developed physically," she said. "Now we have had a mental rebuilding. The bridge can be a symbol for that."

The elegant white-marble "Stari Most," or Old Bridge, has been a beloved landmark since its completion in 1566.

"This is a bridge which has a soul of its own," said Sulejman Kupusovic, in charge of Friday's reopening ceremony. "Even when it was destroyed and did not exist, it was present among the residents even more than ever."

Swimmer crosses channel for 11th time

FOLKESTONE, England — Connecticut marathon swimmer Peter Jurzynski has completed his 11th trip across the English channel in a time of more than 17 hours.

Jurzynski battled through a squall before reaching the beach at Cap Blanc-nez in northern France Thursday night, Mike Oram, honorary secretary of the Channel Swimming and Piloting Federation and Jurzynski's pilot, said Friday.

Jurzynski's time of 17 hours 18 minutes was slower than last year, when he completed the 21 miles in 14 hours and 57 minutes.

Not exactly first-class seating

DUBLIN, Ireland — Two Ryanair employees were fired Friday for sitting in the toilets of a packed airplane in breach of aviation regulations.

The no-frills airline said the pilot of Sunday night's flight from the Spanish city of Girona to Dublin had resigned after admitting he permitted the two off-duty cabin crew workers to sit in the aircraft's rear toilets because no seats were available.

Afghan warlord to run against Karzai

KABUL, Afghanistan — A powerful Afghan warlord will challenge President Hamid Karzai in the country's historic October elections, his spokesman said Thursday.

Abdul Rashid Dostum decided to run after securing support across the war-riven country's deep ethnic divides, spokesman Faizullah Zaki said. Thousands of supporters felled Dostum at a rally in a northern city, Zaki said.

"He didn't want to depend on his own movement, he wanted more people to support him, and today the people showed that," Zaki said. "He will run for president."

There was no immediate reaction from Karzai.

From The Associated Press

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IN THE STATES

House: No postponing election for terrorism

BY MALIA RULON
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House said Thursday it will not back any efforts to postpone this year's presidential elections due to terrorist threats or attacks.

Lawmakers voted 419-2 in support of a congressional resolution from Rep. Bob Ney, R-Ohio, that also says any emergency or individual should be given the authority to postpone the date of a national election, which will be held this year on Nov. 2.

The House action comes after the chairman of a federal commission on voting suggested to congressional leaders last week that there should be a process for canceling or rescheduling an election interrupted by terrorism. National security adviser Condoleezza Rice has said the administration is considering no such plan.

Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge recently warned that intelligence indicates that the al-Qaida terrorist network wants to disrupt the upcoming elections.

Some lawmakers were concerned that postponing an election would make the country look vulnerable. Others worried that an election could be postponed for political purposes.

Ney, who is chairman of the House Administration Committee, says it was necessary for the House to "end such talk immediately."

The resolution had 81 co-sponsors, including House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill.

Unlike a bill, a House resolution is not binding and does not have the force of law. It merely expresses the sentiment of members of the House.

New: War on terror too vague

BY GLENN KESSLER
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The 9/11 commission report offers a broad critique of a central tenet of the Bush administration's foreign policy — that the attacks have required a "war on terrorism."

The report argues that the notion of fighting an enemy called "terrorism" is too diffuse and vague to be effective. Strikingly, the report also makes no reference to the invasion of Iraq as being part of the war on terrorism, a frequent assertion of President Bush and his top aides.

"The first phase of our post-9/11 efforts rightly included military action to topple the Taliban and pursue al Qaeda. This work continues," the report said. "But long-term success demands the use of all elements of national power: diplomacy, intelligence, economic policy, law enforcement, counterterrorism, foreign aid, public diplomacy and homeland defense. If we favor one tool while neglecting others, we leave ourselves vulnerable and weaken our national effort."

The commission offered a series of foreign policy prescriptions to correct what it suggests is an unbalanced global strategy. The effort is to shift the government away from focusing on what the report calls a "generic evil" and toward a more precise definition of the threat.

The report argues that the nation's energy consists of two parts: al-Qaida, a stateless network of terrorists that is "weakened but continues to pose a grave threat," and a radical ideology movement in the Islamic world that is "gathering and will menace Americans and American interests long after" Osama bin Laden is gone.

Thus, the report said, U.S. strategy must focus on dismantling al-Qaida and prevailing over the ideology that fosters Islamic terrorism.

Saddam Hussein's Iraq was a

Major findings of the Sept. 11 commission

- Unsuccessful diplomacy. From 1997 to Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. government unsuccessfully tried diplomatic pressure to persuade the Taliban regime in Afghanistan to stop providing sanctuary to al-Qaida. Also, the Saudi and U.S. governments did not fully share intelligence information or collaborate to disrupt al-Qaida finances.
- Lack of military options. On three occasions in 1998-1999, intelligence was credible enough to warrant planning for possible strikes, but policy-makers decided the risks of error outweighed the benefits.
- Intelligence failures. Agencies struggled during the 1990s to collect intelligence on the developing terrorist threat, but were hobbled by flat budgets, an outdated structure and bureaucratic rivalries.
- FBI troubles. Significant resources were devoted to case-specific prosecutions and after-the-fact investigations of terror attacks rather than prevention.
- Weak border and immigration controls. The 19 hijackers included known al-Qaida operatives who could have

been put on government watch lists and presented fraudulent or otherwise suspicious-looking passports.

■ Weak aviation security. Hijackings slipped through airport security checkpoints even after being selected for extra baggage screening. ■ Terrorist financing. The conspiracy made extensive use of U.S. banks, with hijackers opening accounts in their own names and using passports, but their transactions were unremarkable and essentially invisible.

■ Vulnerable homeland security. Confusion reigned among FAA and military officials the day of the attacks. FAA officials trained to respond to a traditional hijacking, not a suicide attack, were slow to alert the military.

■ Slow emergency response. Basic flaws in New York City's emergency 911 phone system denied people inside the World Trade Center potentially lifesaving information.

■ Poor congressional oversight. Congress was slow to recognize the growing terror threat; it also gave little guidance to executive branch agencies.

From The Associated Press

largely secular state. The report notes that a failed Iraq in the wake of the U.S. invasion could become "breeding grounds for attacks against Americans at home."

The report identifies six areas that it says could be bases for terrorists — areas with rugged terrain and weak governments — that it says should be a particular focus of U.S. policy.

The report also makes specific recommendations about U.S. policy toward three key Islamic states — Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia — and the biggest shift in policy recommended for U.S.-Saudi relations.

The report faulted the failure of both Saudi and American leaders to talk openly about the close relationship at the top levels of government, and for allowing the relationship to be defined mostly by

oil. "As a result, neither the U.S. nor the Saudi people appreciated all the dimensions of the bilateral relationship," the report said.

The report recommended that the United States push the often-repressive society to undertake political and economic reforms, including greater tolerance and cultural respect.

Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry has attacked Saudi Arabia on the campaign trail, and lately President Bush has been more blunt about the need for the Saudis to embrace reforms.

On Afghanistan, the report offers a mixed view of the administration's efforts there. The report notes that the administration paid "relatively little attention" to rebuilding Afghanistan at first but the policy shifted in 2003. The report urged that the United

States continue to make a long-term commitment to a stable Afghanistan.

The report sidestepped the question of whether the invasion of Iraq affected the U.S. commitment to Afghanistan.

The report strongly supports the Bush administration's approach toward Pakistan, including its support of President Pervez Musharraf after he broke with the Taliban government in Afghanistan following the Sept. 11 attacks. Though Musharraf grabbed power in a bloodless coup, he has thwarted democracy, the report said he "represents the best hope for stability in Pakistan and Afghanistan."

The report urged that throughout the Muslim world, the United States must stand for individual educational and economic opportunity and not associate as closely with repressive regimes. "America's policy choices have consequences," the report said. "Those choices must be integrated with America's message of opportunity to the Arab and Muslim world."

Messages of Support

★ TO any direct combat personnel: Just wanted to let all of you know you are in our thoughts everyday. I for one walk with you every step you take. Be well, and watch your topknot.

★ Our military has made us proud. As you fight for our freedom of Iraq, you prove to the world that the U.S. is honorable and compassionate. We are with you in our thoughts and prayers. Thank you, Philip LaPadula, New York

★ Dear Service Members, Keep up the good work. Please know that back here in America we watch everyday and pray for your safety. Come back soon! Gwen Starkey

Nuke alarm accidentally shut off

VERNON, Vt. — A portion of the emergency alert system at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant was inadvertently shut off by an electric company line worker last week, officials say.

It was several days before the plant, as well as state and local officials, corrected the problem.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission said Thursday it was launching a special investigation into the lapse and would send a specialist in emergency alert systems to Vermont to investigate.

An emergency generator switched on when the system was disconnected last Friday. But an alert that the generator was running — a signal that something was wrong — apparently never reached state, federal or plant officials.

The system was completely down for about 14 hours after the generator used its up response.

Greenpeace on thin ice in Alaska

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Alaska prosecutors have accused Greenpeace of breaking en-

vironmental laws, citing the activist group's ship for not submitting oil spill prevention documents before entering state waters.

The Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise, with 27 activists on board, is touring Southeast Alaska to protest logging in the Tongass National Forest.

Department of Law spokesman Mark Morales said the misdemeanor charges were filed Thursday.

Poll: Bush, Kerry even

WASHINGTON — Despite dissatisfaction with the country's direction and the administration's principal policies, the presidential race remains a virtual dead heat as the Democratic convention approaches, a Los Angeles Times poll has found.

Sen. John F. Kerry, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, leads President Bush by 2 percentage points among registered voters nationwide, with or without liberal independent candidate Ralph Nader included in the matchup.

That's an advantage within the poll's margin of error, and a smaller lead than Kerry enjoyed in a Times survey last month.

But other poll findings show narrow — and

in some instances broad — majorities unhappy with Bush's direction, a threatening trend for an incumbent.

Fifty-four percent say the nation is moving in the wrong direction.

Virginia man executed

JARRATT, Va. — A man who fatally shot his wife and 2-year-old son was put to death by injection Thursday night.

Asked by the warden if he had any final words, Mark W. Bailey said in a clear, strong voice, "No, thank you." He was pronounced dead at 9:07 p.m. at the Greensville Correctional Center.

Barry R. Warner on Thursday evening denied Bailey's request for clemency, noting that his case had been reviewed by several courts. The Supreme Court unanimously denied Bailey's appeal Wednesday.

Born May 34, the wife three times in the head as she slept in their Hampton home in September 1998. He gunned down his son moments later as the child climbed out of bed.

Bailey, a Gulf War veteran and Navy submariner, was convicted of capital murder in July 1999.

From The Associated Press

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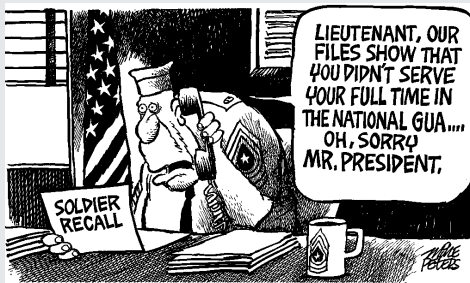
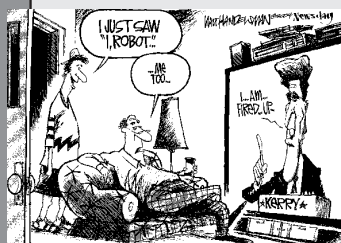
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Looking at the news

A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons



Ruby returns home

CA LOS ANGELES — Ruby the elephant, whose transfer to another zoo seemed to make her one unhappy camper and prompted a lawsuit, can start packing her trunk. She's coming home.

The 43-year-old African elephant was moved from Los Angeles to the Knoxville Zoo in Tennessee last year, but things didn't go as planned.

She was loaned to the Tennessee zoo in May 2003 to serve as role model for younger elephants trying to breed and raise calves. But she shoved an elephant when they were introduced and has been kept separate from the other elephants by a metal rail for most of her 14 months there, officials said.

By contrast, at the city zoo in Los Angeles, Ruby would touch trunks and apparently play with Gita, an Asian elephant she had known for 16 years.

Man busted himself

PA LANGHORNE — A man who returned a rental car allegedly forgot to take along 88 bags of heroin he had left in the car.

Employees of an Enterprise Rent-A-Car agency called police and reported finding the drugs hidden under a layer of napkins in the car's console, authorities said.

Using information found in the wallet the man also left behind, Detective Daniel Baranoski of nearby Middletown contacted Robert Laguerre, posing as someone who had found the heroin, and told him he wanted to return the drugs for a reward, authorities said.

Baranoski set up a meeting with Laguerre at a mall in this Philadelphia suburb and Laguerre was arrested when he arrived, police said.

Laguerre was arraigned Thursday on charges of possession of a controlled substance with intent to deliver.

Officers get a shock

NM PORTALES — Lightning struck two New Mexico State Police officers while they were helping motorists on a road flooded by a thunderstorm, but both men stayed on the job.

Officers Clint Varnell and Lance Bateman were sent to help people in about 15 vehicles stalled by a flash flood late Tuesday, said state police Lt. Jimmy Glascock.

They were struck after rescuing a woman and three small children from one vehicle in a ditch.

However, the men continued helping motorists until the water started to recede.

They eventually drove themselves to a hospital in Portales and were transferred to Covenant, where they were listed in satisfactory condition Wednesday, Glascock said. Bateman said he did not consider his work heroic, "just earning my pay."

Besides, he added: "We needed the rain."

Patron censoring books

UT LAYTON — Library officials are facing a mystery that only Jessica Fletcher could solve.

It seems a library patron has been busy crossing out the "hells" and "damns" in books based on the



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

popular "Murder, She Wrote" TV series and changing them to "hecks" and "damns."

Library workers are at a loss as to what to do about the self-appointed censor who is blotting out the purple prose with a purple pen.

"It would be by luck or a total accident if we were to catch [the culprit]," says county library director Pete Giacomini. "That's why we are asking people to just let us know if they see anything or notice any other markings so that we can get it on the record."

So far, the freelance editor's comments appear to be limited to the Fletcher novels.

Tax foes force vote?

NV CARSON CITY — Tax foes say they gathered enough signatures to force a vote on repealing a record \$833 million state tax increase. About 68,000 people signed the petition. About 65,000 signed another petition prohibiting local and state government employees from serving in elected office. Officials must verify the signatures before putting the measures on the November ballot.

No free time for MLK

SC GREENVILLE — For a second year, employees of Greenville County voted against taking a day off to honor slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.

Greenville remains the only



Perplexed percussion
Thomas Mason, a junior drummer, looks over his music Tuesday afternoon as the drum squad rehearses on the front lawn of the Youngstown, Ohio, school. The band started practice this week and will leave for band camp Aug. 9.

county in South Carolina that does not give employees the King holiday off with pay.

A policy passed in 2003 gave county employees five fixed holidays and let them choose the other five days they get off work.

The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday came in a distant sixth with 21 percent of the vote.

Slow start for police

MA MEDFIELD — Two young males who drove off in a piece of heavy equipment stolen from a construction site led a police officer on a slow-speed chase Sunday before jumping off the running vehicle, which then ran into the officer's parked cruiser, police said.

The equipment, called a hull, came to a stop after striking the unoccupied cruiser, which was totaled, police Sgt. John Wilhelmi said.

Police led an unsuccessful search for two young males who fled after the chase. The pursuit began after the two apparently broke through a locked gate at Blake Middle School in Medfield, a suburb southwest of Boston.

Police brought in specially trained dogs to search for the pair in a wooded area that includes marshland. The search was called off around 10 a.m.

Jays vs. Frito-Lay

IL CHICAGO — A federal judge has ordered that Frito-Lay Inc. turn over its rival documents battling over its claim that Chicagoans prefer their potato chips.

On Monday, Chicago-based Jays Foods went to court to challenge Frito-Lay's advertising claim that Chicagoans "prefer the taste of Lay's over Jays."

The lawsuit alleges the billboard ads compare a Lay's product to an unflavored Jays potato chip that doesn't exist. Jays says in the lawsuit that the Plano, Texas-based Frito-Lay has refused to provide test results to substantiate its ads.

A U.S. District judge refused Wednesday to allow Frito-Lay to keep parts of its documentation confidential. He says the public has a right to know.

Robber aids in capture

WV BARBOURSVILLE — An accused bank robber easily made away with some cash, and then made it easy for the cops to catch him.

Authorities say Brian Fenton walked into the First State Bank on Tuesday and told a teller to call 911 because he was robbing the bank.

Fenton, 41, allegedly waited for the teller to make the call and then left with an undisclosed amount of cash. He was arrested by a deputy waiting outside the door, said Sgt. Mike McCallister with the Cabell County Sheriff's Department.

"As soon as he was out of the bank, he walked directly into the arms of Deputy Todd Wentz," McCallister said.

No weapon was found. Fenton was charged with felony bank robbery. He was jailed Wednesday on \$100,000 bail.

If convicted, he faces 10 to 25 years in prison.



Got your nose

Kevin Bonner, 2, of Columbus, Ohio, stares at Doty on Tuesday through the glass at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. Doty is the great-granddaughter of Colo, who in 1956 became one of the first gorillas born in captivity. Doty was born on April 17 at the zoo.



Chutes and nappers

From a routine game of parachute play, take a power nap in the parachute at Atwater Park in Canandaigua, N.Y., on Tuesday. The two are participants in the YMCA Kidventures program.



Eversing's fine, ocifer! Iowa State Trooper D.L. Cutts watches as Brian Jones, a junior at Ames High School, tries to walk a straight line while wearing "drunk goggles" during a driver's education class at Meeker Elementary School in Ames, Iowa. The goggles simulate impairment on the wearer's motor-visual skills due to intoxication.



Gourd gorge Lane Battles, 3, of Rush Springs, Okla., eats a slice of watermelon at his dad's melon stand Monday in Lawton, Okla. Rush Springs, a mecca for melon lovers, hosts a watermelon festival in August.



Speedy swing

Shane Funk, 4, left, and Whitney Funk, 2, of Baltimore, get a push on the swing from Dalton Ewing, 6, of Rushville, Ohio, on Tuesday at the State Run Living Historical Farm, near Lithopolis, Ohio. The farm is set in the 1880s and operates with methods, clothing and technology from that period.



Cannonball!

Sam Curran 14, left, and Max Harrington, 14, both of Rye, N.H., leap off the Sagamore Bridge in Portsmouth, N.H., into the creek on a hot Tuesday afternoon.

Black bears play house

NJ WEST ORANGE — A planned black bear exhibit at Essex County's zoo will allow visitors to view the bears the way they're often seen in New Jersey — through a living room window. The Turtle Back Zoo's "Bears in Your Backyard" exhibit is taking advantage of the many encounters New Jersey residents now have with bears, a consequence of the state's dense population and its burgeoning brown population.

"One of the viewing stations will be from a [mock] living room and a kitchen, and one of the TVs in the living room will be showing educational bear videos," said zoo Director Jeremy Goodman.

The exhibit is scheduled to be completed later this year and stocked with a pair of bear cubs in the spring.

Not competing for bones

WA RIDGEFIELD — As this Columbia River town searches for a new city manager, one candidate appears to have two legs up over the others. Signs have popped up all over the city in support of Otis, an 11-year-old Boston terrier.

No one's saying who made the flippers, complete with a profile shot of Otis and a disclaimer that the signs were paid for by "he will do better than the last guy committee."

Ridgefield's former city manager, Randy Bombardier, was placed on administrative leave in March, then fired after being accused of removing lead-based paint from City Hall without public safety or environmental precautions.

In June, the state attorney general's office charged Bombardier with official misconduct, which carries a maximum penalty of one year in jail and a \$5,000 fine.

Bombardier has said he did nothing wrong and that City Council members knew more about the paint than he did.

Officer takes own report

TX WICHITA FALLS — Not only was Police Chief Ken Coughlin's home burglarized, but he had to fill out the report, too.

Coughlin left his garage door open when he went for a walk in the morning. His family stayed behind, and his sons saw two men carrying tools from the home while he was away.

When Coughlin returned about an hour later, his wife was looking for evidence.

Because the officers were busy on Sunday, the chief took his own incident report instead of waiting until another officer was free.

Coughlin said at a community meeting that the Wichita Falls Police Department is officially 18 officers short of the allotted 190 positions.

Judge OK's Web site

AL MONTGOMERY — A judge ruled that a defendant in a federal drug case may post a Web site seeking information on potential witnesses whose pictures are displayed under a "WANTED" banner. U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson said the free speech and fair trial rights of the defendant, Leon Carmichael, outweigh the government's concern that it may pose a threat to its witnesses.

Vandals loot site

IL JONESBORO — County police stepped up patrols after vandals looted a University of Illinois archaeological site last week. Researchers believe bits of pottery and fire-cracked rocks found there were part of an Indian campsite dating to around 1,000 A.D. The state wants to widen roads in the area and sent archaeologists to examine it for historic significance.

Alleged patient abuse

OK PADEN — The State Department of Health appointed a temporary manager for a care center for mentally disabled adults because the operator allegedly caused residents into having sex with him. In its filing for an emergency order, the health department alleged that Junior Clonts admitted to sexual abuse. A judge barred Clonts from dealing with residential-care patients and Health Department officials.

Man found on road

FL TAMPA — The man was found on the side of the road, curled up and naked. He couldn't walk or talk.

On Tuesday, more than 24 hours after he was discovered, hospital officials were still desperate to know his name.

They know this much: He is a black man in his 20s who is mentally and physically disabled, according to hospital officials. Police brought him there after passersby saw him lying on the ground near a convenience store and called for help.

"He will smile and laugh and coo, and that's it," said Stephanie Shaw, a registered nurse at the hospital.

"He obviously would not have been able to get out of where he was lying to go to this convenience store," she said. "I'm assuming someone dropped him off."

Men fight over toilet

CT STRATFORD — It was a case of potty rage.

Two men were arrested after a fight broke out over a public toilet.

Andres A. Diaz, 52, was using the bathroom at a Burger King while Joseph Manuel Augusto, 37, waited for his turn Friday night.

The two men argued when Diaz emerged after what Augusto thought was too much time, police said.

Heard words escalated into a physical fight.

The two men allegedly bumped chests, then chased each other around the restaurant with their weapons. Augusto was armed with a small razor pocket knife and Diaz brandished a Burger King straw dispenser, police said.

No one was injured. Both men were charged with breach of peace and issued a summons to appear in court on July 27.

First in home injuries

NM ALBUQUERQUE — Injuries in the home kill more people in New Mexico than in any other state, a national group says. The nonprofit Home Safety Council ranked New Mexico at the top of the list for the number of fatalities from unintentional home injuries. New Mexico averaged 13.03 deaths per 100,000 people from 1992-99, nearly double the national average of 6.83.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES 'N' PLACES

Judd jazzes up 'De-Lovely'

BY DESSON THOMSON

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Ashley Judd throws a pink ball across her hotel room.

One of her two cockpots — either Buttermilk or Shug — runs for it. In town recently to promote "De-Lovely," a film about Cole Porter's complicated relationship with his wife, Linda (played by Judd), she exudes physical busy-buss. She confesses she can be "manic" when it comes to certain things, like traveling, or following her husband, race-car driver Dario Franchitti, around the world for his races.

But preparing for a movie role, she says, is an easier task. "It's just reading," she says. She did a lot of reading for "De-Lovely."

Linda Porter, a hearty supporter of her husband's music and the inspiration for many of his songs, had to live with a man who was far more physically attracted to men. The movie is about, among other things, how she keeps up her love for her husband, despite a nonphysical relationship.

Playing Linda appealed to Judd, she says, because "she was really rich. I thought it would be fun to play someone so rich. And stylish and smart. And independent. An emancipated woman in the Jazz Age, unconventional and with her own convictions. Very impressive lady."

In terms of Cole Porter's homosexuality, "I think Linda knew everything. Maybe it's not on a higher plane. A love about two people who authentically knew each other for who they were. ... They had a love and understanding that did not have a sexual basis. She was an incredible, kinda high-class enabler of his music."

Linda's real concern, Judd continues, was when Cole's behavior in Hollywood "became outrageous and was a threat to his well-being. That was a time when homosexuality was not only viewed as terribly aberrant but it was illegal. ... There was no telling what could have happened to [Cole], this cherished American who really reigned in this country for several decades. ... I don't think the public knew."

The interview is going amicably until there's mention of a certain tabloid TV special ("The Judds: E! True Hollywood Story") that recently aired tacky implications about Judd's family, which includes the singing mother-daughter duo Naomi and Wynonna. According to the special,

when Ashley Judd first joined, she was voted the most likely to quit her acting class at Playhouse West Repertory Theater, under acting teacher Robert Carnegie.

"I think I share that distinction with Dustin Hoffman and Gene Hackman, who received similar lack of confidence from their fellow students. Good company."

She says it with the kind of tone that could cause frostbite.

"The thing about that network [E!] is, you lie down with dogs and you get up with fleas," Judd says. "I disapproved of the entire thing. The train had left the station, and they were going to do it regardless of what we felt about it. I know some people chose to participate to direct them in an honest way. But I haven't seen it; I won't see it. It's as much a tabloid as the National Enquirer. I have no respect for it and what they do. And I'd like to pinch people who watch it to get them to wake up."

Quick, back to the movie. Or life. Yeah, life's a good subject.

"I want more than anything else in this life to be happy," she says.

"I had an unhappy enough childhood. I don't want to be unhappy anymore."

Watching her sister and mother, the successful country music duo, made her realize "money doesn't buy you happiness."

What does give Ashley Judd happiness? "Work is a part of that, the extent to which I can be both creatively challenged and fulfilled. Like operating on a few levels simultaneously, maybe it's the right brain and left brain, being able to contribute to my work that's stimulating. I'm generally a very feeling person in terms of social injustice and that's important to me, and, you know, a fine spring day."



KRT

Boss magazine heads south

A popular fan magazine and Web site devoted to Bruce Springsteen soon will be based in North Carolina.

Chris Phillips, editor and publisher of Backstreets, which has covered Springsteen since 1980, will relocate to Carboro from Washington, D.C.

Phillips, 33, and his small staff track and review concerts, give news updates about Springsteen and his E Street Band, sell merchandise and host a lively message board where fans can chat and exchange tickets.

Raitt riffs against Bush

Winding up her summer tour across Europe, Bonnie Raitt drew thunderous applause at the Stockholm Jazz Festival in Sweden for dedicating a classic to President Bush.

"We're gonna sing this for George Bush because he's out of here, people!" Raitt crowed Tuesday night before she launched into the opening licks of "Your Good Thing

(Is About to End)," a cover that was featured on her 1979 album, "The Glow."

The song, written by Isaac Hayes and David Porter, has been sung by several notable performers, including Mable John and Lou Rawls.

Raitt's comments resulted in a round of applause and even whistles from among the estimated 3,000 concertgoers at the Swedish capital's annual jazz event held on the banks of the downtown Skeppsholmen island.

Rose restaurant heist

Pete Rose's Palm Beach County, Fla., restaurant was broken into by burglars made off with over \$10,000 in sports memorabilia.

Collector jerseys, an autographed football and a pair of Muhammad Ali boxing gloves were among the items stolen in the early Tuesday morning heist at the Pete Rose Ballpark Cafe, a Boynton Beach police report said.

"I didn't know about [the robbery] until I got here," baseball's career hits leader told

WFOTV in Miami as he surveyed the damage.

According to the report, police responded to the break-in at 4:34 a.m. after receiving a call from a security officer at a nearby hotel.

Police suspect the break-in happened between 2:30 and 4:15 a.m.

A broken glass panel on one of the restaurant's doors had been smashed, police said.

Trump trumps Bird casino bid

Donald Trump bested two casino groups — including one backed by hometown hero Larry Bird — for the bid to build a casino in the struggling community of French Lick, Ind., where movie stars once vacationed.

The State Gaming Commission awarded the contract to Trump on Tuesday, at the end of two days of public hearings. Commissioners said the billionaire developer had been unanimously endorsed by a local committee in the southern Indiana community about 60 miles northwest of Louisville, Ky.

Trump promised to open the casino by the end of 2005 and give \$10 million to the French Lick Springs Resort & Hotel and the West Baden Springs Hotel for restoration. Trump's casino proposal includes a

deli, a buffet and an entertainment lounge. Trump has the added draw of Indiana governor Fuzzy Zoeller as a partner.

Celebrating Don Knotts

Don Knotts' hometown, Morgantown, W.Va., is planning several tributes to one of its favorite sons, including a possible film festival next year.

Knotts, who celebrated his 80th birthday Wednesday, will be honored over the coming year for his contributions to the film industry.

Knotts, who lives in Beverly Hills, Calif., That includes a possible site where people could learn about the comedian actor, his films and his connection to Morgantown.

"He's always remembered his roots," Justice said. "He is our favorite son."

Knotts, who lives in Beverly Hills, Calif., is still mainly identified with the role that won him five Emmys, that of bumbling Deputy Barney Fife on the '60s family comedy "The Andy Griffith Show."

Stories and photos from The Associated Press



Raitt

Rose

Horoscope

The first weekend under the Leo sun is bursting with excitement, new plot twists and budding relationships. The moon enters Scorpio in the early evening, shrouding the night in a fog of sexual tension and sensual awareness. If you've been wondering what a loved one is thinking, you'll now figure it out without having to ask.

Joyce Jillson



TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 24). Paradoxically, when you crack down on your self-discipline, you experience a new level of freedom. A major personal goal is reached in August. Travel in September includes new job opportunities. Big money in October is from a lucky deal. You could marry in November or March of next year. Cancer and Aries are sincere and exciting partners.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). New talents are featured. There's the tiniest inkling in the back of your mind that says, "Maybe I could do that," but you have no evidence of your actual aptitude. Use your Aries bravery to jump in and risk being rotten at first.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Security is the issue. Things that made you feel safe before (job, money, relationships) are fragile, transitory states in life that can't be counted fully. The real security is the creative power of the universe that holds the planets in orbit.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're developing excellent communication with your inner circle, which makes your whole world more smooth.

Part of the process is admitting when you've been dishonest, even if it was something small.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Consistent effort toward a goal is more reliable than a whimsical wish. Travel, even close by, is uplifting. Don't worry now about what you can afford. When you return home, you've got much more than what you started with.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You've heard of people sabotaging themselves, but you never thought you were one of them. However, now

you may feel like disconnecting from the exact people you need to stay connected with. Resist! Stay connected.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Flow with the changes that are coming at you from all sides. The shift from old to new is exciting and a bit stressful, too. Reach out. Have conversations with friends. It helps to know that others are going through the same thing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You make sense of other people's ideas, fleshing out the details and taking things to a practical level. Spend time with people who can appreciate your brilliance. A loved one soon returns to your arms happier than ever.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Show-and-tell skills are required! Sure, you're out in the real world, pursuing growth-up causes, but these grade-school talents are still as valuable as they ever were in the cause of winning friends and influencing people.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). This will be a lively day of rejuvenation and anticipation. Your ego is inflated by praise—it's lovely to be recognized by people you respect. You continue to grow closer to what it is you meant to do in the first place.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're feeling rather aggressive, but it can be put to a very positive end. Grab the horns of life like you're not afraid of being hurt, and you'll make the most of this lucky day. Don't back off when you manifest what you want.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'll see pigs from things begun on your own and in secret. Let the energy percolate inside you instead of dissipating it by telling too many people. An hour or two on your project is enough to push it ahead considerably.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Socially, you are quite in demand. But spreading yourself too thin is a danger. When your concentration is too divided, you'll miss an opportunity to connect on any real level with even one person.

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Peanuts



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



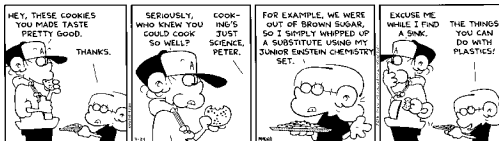
Red Rover



Better or Worse



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



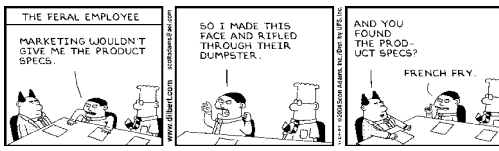
Spider Man



Blondie



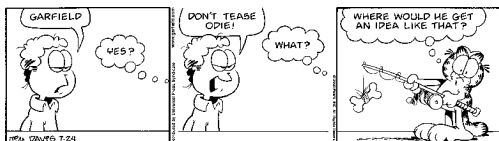
Dilbert



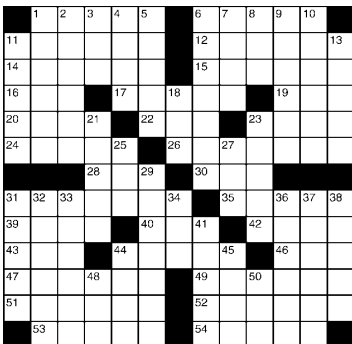
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Tourney format
- 6 Bridge coups
- 11 Big shock
- 12 Fans' wall art
- 14 Chinese menu item
- 15 "Call of the Wild" author
- 16 In an env.
- 17 Myth, for one
- 19 Nanki- ("Mikado" character)
- 20 On
- 22 Perched
- 23 Grain storage structure
- 24 "NA'AS"HI locale
- 26 Least exciting
- 28 L times VI
- 30 "Uplume" writer
- 31 Hybrid fuel
- 35 Millennium fractions

Down

- 1 Without further
- 2 Ill will
- 3 Chic no more
- 4 Cupid's field
- 5 Barber's challenges
- 6 Go your separate ways
- 7 Serengeti roamer
- 8 Agriculture Secretary Veneman
- 9 Backyard "dessert"
- 10 Seamstress' supply
- 11 Make adjustments
- 13 Beezer
- 18 Blue
- 21 Rio Grande feeder
- 23 Coloridge called it
- 24 "a gente thing"
- 25 Interlaken interjection
- 27 Powell co-star
- 29 Put one over on
- 31 Rock cavity
- 32 Cookwear
- 33 Moch
- 34 Vietnam Memorial designer Maya
- 36 Fit for farming
- 37 Finch
- 38 Shell out
- 41 River of Rome
- 44 Venetian magistrate
- 45 Sauce source
- 48 Mandible
- 50 Sagebrush St.

Answer to Previous Puzzle



7-24

CRYPTOQUIP

R S Z N M X R U R H G A
Z G D T R U O . X A M O R N D G
U Z X D T ' U Q Z P G A S Z

HAHQPAQDTG APNZHRVZGRAH.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I SUPPOSE YOU MIGHT CALL A BULLET PRODUCTION COMPANY'S PRESIDENT A BIG SHOT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals N

Penny-pinching husband exhausting

Dear Abby: My husband, "Ollie," and I are in our late 40s and have been married 25 years. The first five were rocky, but we made it work — and then the children came along.

Ollie has become so controlling I can hardly breathe. I work 55 hours a week. My only extravagance is buying coffee and a snack and lunch at work a couple of times a week. Ollie demands to know every penny goes and what I'm "wasting."

We are not intimate. He has his own business. I am emotionally drained. He refuses to go to counseling.

The moment I get home in the evening, he starts berating me. He isn't hitting me, but I feel beaten emotionally. Can verbal abusers become physical abusers? Should I see a lawyer? Without outside intervention, how can we survive?

— **Tired of the Battle in Michi-**

Dear Tired: Yes, verbal abuse can escalate to physical abuse. The stress is taking its toll on you. If it continues, Ollie will survive, but you may not. You feel "beaten" because, emotionally, that's what's happening. The only person who can make it stop is you.

Dear Abby



Your husband will not be thrilled when you finally stand up for yourself, so be prepared. Make a list of his bank accounts, assets, Social Security and driver's license numbers. Then consult an attorney who specializes in family law. Once Ollie has been put on notice that the marriage is over if he isn't willing to get help for his problem, he may be more receptive to counseling. And at that point, you'll have to decide whether you and the children are better off with him or without him.

Dear Abby: I was recently invited to a baby shower for an

acquaintance. As she opened her gifts, a girlfriend sitting next to her wrote down the name of the gift-giver and the item on a sheet of paper. At the same time, this friend was also penning thank-you notes to each giver! At the end of the shower, the mommy-to-be signed each note, "Love, X" — and handed them to each giver.

How should a person react to something like that? My first reaction was that this woman should receive no more of my time, since my attendance and my gift were not worth a personal thank-you note and a 37-cent stamp.

Confused: Could the honorée be functionally illiterate? If that's the case, you should not have been offended. If she's not, however, it's clear the mommy-to-be is socially ignorant, and I'm sure you weren't the only guest who was offended.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the internet at <http://www.usexpress.com/dearabby>

Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

VORAF

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

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DUPON

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

NIRVEM

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

EDMERE

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Ans: □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

THE □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's

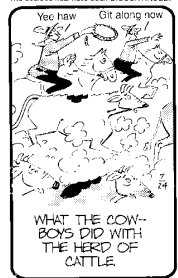
Jumbles: WEARY PARTY BEAVER MALTED

Answer: Why the see? visited the library — TO 'READ' BETTER

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argiron

The 900900 most have been DISCONTINUED.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

THE □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

(Answers Monday)

Visiting the dying can give comfort

Dear Annie: Recently, the father of a good friend of mine (I'll call her "Natalie") was diagnosed with terminal cancer and sent home on hospice care. A mutual friend told me that doctors don't expect Natalie's father to live more than a month.

I have been close to Natalie's family for such a long time that I have come to call her parents "Mom and Dad." I want to see Natalie's father, not necessarily say goodbye, but to talk to him one more time. I am hesitant to do so because I don't know if he wants visitors, and I'm not sure what I would say. What exactly do you talk about with someone who doesn't have much longer to live?

— **Sorrowful in Pennsylvania**
Dear Sorrowful: Call Natalie, and ask if her father is up to having you visit. If not, send a "thinking of you" card, and continue to call regularly for updates.

If Natalie encourages you to

Annie's Mailbox



visit, you don't have to say much.

Your presence will provide comfort, even if you simply hold his hand, rub his back or feet, chat about wonderful memories you share, etc. It's also good to tell him how much you care about him. If he wants to talk about his illness, simply listen, but let him be the one to bring it up.

Dear Annie: My husband of 20 years had an affair with a co-worker that lasted about a year. In the midst of his affair, his job relocated us to Chicago, which obviously made his extra-curricular activities more difficult. A few months after our relocation, he finally confessed what I had suspected for months. We had marriage counseling, and things seemed better, but I was so hurt and insecure at the time that I would have done anything to save the marriage.

Three months ago, I met an attractive man who is exciting,

but he's very mysterious and does not share a whole lot with me. On the other hand, I have shared my thoughts, hopes and dreams with this man. We are not having an affair, but I can't stop thinking about him. The idea of sleeping with him thrills me. It's wrong, I know, and it would be so hypocritical of me to do it, but I can't get him out of my head.

How can I overcome these feelings?

— **Chicago**

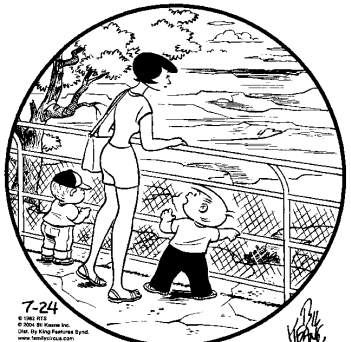
Dear Chicago: You have not actually forgiven your husband for his affair, nor have you gotten past it. It is natural that you would be attracted to someone who epitomizes the romance-novel notion of a good-looking, mysterious stranger.

You must decide if you want to stay married or not. Go back to your marriage counselor, alone if necessary, and work it out.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to annie@mailboxcomcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



"The ranger said the river dug the canyon, Mommy, and you said God did it. Who's right?"

GRAFFITI



Dennis the Menace



"I GUESS THEY PUT PICTURES ON THE SIGNS 'CAUSE DEER CAN'T READ."

@Gary Larson

The Far Side



"Oh, for the love of —there goes Henry! — Rita, you're closest to him—give that c-clamp about a quarter turn, will ya?"

Non Sequitur



Maddux makes quick work of Reds

Cubs ace gets No. 298 with brisk four-hitter; S.F.'s Schmidt falters

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Greg Maddux seemed as if he was in a hurry to get his 298th career victory.

Maddux needed just 92 pitches over a crisp 2 hours, 15 minutes for his second straight complete game, limiting the Cincinnati Reds to four hits in the Chicago Cubs' 13-2 victory on Thursday.

"Runs, man. Runs are a beautiful thing," Maddux said. "When you get a lead like that, it changes the way the game is played."

Maddux (9-7) has pitched consecutive complete games for the first time since September 2000 and

has 105 in his career. Moises Alou homered twice and Mark Grudzielanek had a three-run shot off Cory Lidle (6-8). Aramis Ramirez added a grand slam off Ryan Wagner to back Maddux, who walked none and struck out six.

The only hitter to give Maddux trouble was Reds catcher Javier Valente, who hit solo homers in the third and fifth innings.

Maddux, who shut out the Brewers in his previous start, will get a chance for No. 299 next week at Milwaukee.

"Really, it's not about me," Maddux said of 300. "It's about trying to get to the postseason and having another shot at getting a ring."

Padres 9, Giants 4: Jason Schmidt couldn't figure out umpire Matt Hollowell's strike zone and failed to get out of the sixth inning in his worst outing of the season. Instead of a 13th straight win, he took his first loss in 17 starts.

"There was a lot of funny stuff going on," Schmidt said. "It was a mind-boggling afternoon. Every umpire has got his own zone, and you've got to adjust to it."

Schmidt (12-3) struggled from the start, allowing two singles to open the game before striking out the side. He started the third by walking Padres starter David Wells and couldn't get back on track. He gave up a two-run single to former teammate Rich Aurilia and a three-run homer to Jay Payton in a six-run third, and left after giving up a sacrifice fly in the sixth.

Wells (6-5) allowed four runs, 10 hits and two walks in 5 1/3 innings.

Twins 10, Phillies 6: Alex Gonzalez and Jeff Conine hit three-run homers and Mike Redmond had a solo shot for visiting Florida.

Armando Benitez bailed the Marlins out of a one-out, bases-loaded jam in the eighth inning, coming in to face Jason Michaels with a 3-1 count. After striking out Michaels, he got Mike Lieberthal to fly out. Benitez then pitched the ninth for his 33rd save.

Braves 2, Pirates 1 (10): Johnny Estrada



Arizona outfielder Danny Bautista takes a hit away from the Houston Astros' Craig Biggio during the first inning of Thursday night's game in Phoenix. Houston beat the Diamondbacks 10-3.

drove in the winning run with a bases-loaded sacrifice fly in the bottom of the 10th against Salomon Torres (6-4), who was pitching for the first time since serving a three-game suspension for throwing twice at Oakland's Damon Miller last month.

Expos 4, Mets 1: Tony Batista hit a tie-breaking two-run homer off Julio Franco (2-7) in the eighth inning, leading visiting Montreal over the Mets. Brad Wilkerson also homered for the Expos.

Luis Ayala (2-6) pitched a perfect seventh to win it in relief of starter Zach Day.

Dodgers 4, Rockies 2: Milton Bradley hit a go-ahead homer in the eighth as the host Dodgers pulled off another comeback, beating Colorado for their 15th win in 17 games. Aaron Cook pitched seven innings for the

Rockies in a spirited duel with Odalis Perez and handed a 2-1 lead to Tim Lincecum (4-2). Eric Gagne struck out the side in the ninth for his 28th save. Guillermo Mota (8-3) won it.

Astros 10, Diamondbacks 3: Carlos Beltran drove in three runs with two homers and Adam Everett had a homer and four RBIs for visiting Houston. Arizona has its second 11-game losing streak this season.

Roy Oswalt (9-8) picked up his fifth victory in seven starts.

Cardinals 4, Brewers 0: Jason Marquis (10-4) threw eight innings. Jim Edmonds homered off Ben Sheets (9-7) and the Cardinals shut out visiting Milwaukee for the second consecutive game.

Edgar Renteria, Albert Pujols and John Mabry drove in runs for St. Louis.

Ortiz, Cubs pair handed suspensions by baseball

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Boston slugger David Ortiz and Chicago Cubs pitcher Carlos Zambrano were suspended for five games each Thursday for their recent actions during games.

Cubs pitcher LaTroy Hawkins got a three-game suspension from another incident.

The three players plan to appeal the penalties, which were set to start Friday. They will be able to play until hearings are held.

Ortiz, Zambrano and Hawkins also were fined undisclosed amounts by Bob Watson, vice president of on-field operations for Major League Baseball.

"I know the suspension was going to come, but I wasn't expecting that many games," Ortiz said after the opener of a day-night doubleheader against Baltimore.

Ortiz became upset after being called out on strikes by umpire Matt Hollowell last Friday night at Anaheim. The Red Sox star had to be restrained by manager Terry Francona and coach Brad Mills. Ortiz then threw a couple of bats onto the field that came close to hitting umpires Bill Hohn and Mark Carlson.

Cubs General Manager Jim Hendry said the suspensions of Zambrano and Hawkins were more than he expected.

"We anticipated some action. We were hoping it would be a little more lenient," Hendry said.

Zambrano was penalized for intentionally hitting St. Louis' Jim Edmonds with a pitch Monday night at Wrigley Field. Zambrano was ejected. Zambrano's previous pitch had been hit by Scott Rolen for a go-ahead home run in the ninth inning.

Earlier in the game, Edmonds homered, struck out and was hit by a pitch from Zambrano, and the two exchanged words.

On Tuesday, Hawkins gave up a tiebreaking homer in the ninth to the Cardinals' Albert Pujols. Hawkins was ejected after he started yelling at home plate umpire Tim Lincecum. The reliever had to be restrained by manager Dusty Baker and several Cubs coaches from going at Tschida.

Piece of concrete falls from Wrigley's upper deck

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — A three-piece piece of concrete was found that apparently fell from the upper deck of 90-year-old Wrigley Field.

After concrete chunks fell at different points on the 9 and July 16, a team employee found a fragment Wednesday that was "relatively small, palm-of-your-hand" sized, Mike Lufano, the Cubs' VP president for community affairs, said.

"Repairs were made and city officials notified," he said.



The city buildings department has asked for an inspection, and team management said it will share the results.

Mayor Richard Daley said Wednesday he wouldn't hesitate to close some or all of the stadium to protect fans.

Ruth bat in Cleveland

CLEVELAND — The bat Babe

Ruth used to hit the first home run in Yankee Stadium more than 80 years ago is on display at a sports show and could be sold for more than \$1 million this year.

The bat is among the memorabilia displayed during The National Sports Collectors Convention, which runs through Sunday.

The owner of the bat, SportsCards Plus, said in June that it planned to auction the bat. On Thursday, Sotheby's said it would handle the auction Dec. 2 in New York.

Ordonez knee to be checked

CLEVELAND — Right fielder Magglio Ordonez was sent back to Chicago for tests on his left knee, still sore nearly two months after the White Sox star had surgery.

Ordonez told manager Ozzie Guillen his knee was hurting and he was removed from the starting lineup before Thursday night's game against the Cleveland Indians.

Ordonez was to be examined by team physician Dr. Charles Bush-Joseph.

"I hope it's nothing real bad, but we have to be prepared for the worst," Guillen said.

Ordonez, a four-time All-Star, had surgery to repair torn cartilage in his left knee June 5. He missed 36 games before returning on July 8.

Team trainer Herm Schneider said he couldn't pinpoint what was causing the soreness in Ordonez's knee.

"It's not real alarming to me — just this new," Schneider said. "He right has this discomfort and we don't know what it is."

Sox keep pace with Twins

The Associated Press

The Chicago White Sox came into Cleveland and silenced the Indians.

The Indians were poised to make a run entering the two-game series with the Sox, having hit 21 homers and scored 52 runs in the previous six games.

Now, that's 52 runs in eight games after Chicago shut out the Indians on Thursday for the second night in a row. Freddy Garcia threw seven innings in Chicago's 3-0 victory. A night earlier, Mark Buehrle faced the minimum 27 batters in a two-hitter.

Garcia, acquired by the White Sox from Seattle for a playoff push, out-pitched Indians ace C.C. Sabathia, who gave up seven hits in seven innings.

Carl Everett had two RBI singles. "My team needed me to go out and throw a shutout," Sabathia said. "I feel like I didn't do a good enough job against Freddy. He was dealing. Everybody knew how important these games were and we probably pressed a little. But we faced two great pitchers, too."

Cleveland was shut out in consecutive games for the first time since April 1993, at Seattle. The Indians had not been shut out at home in two straight games since 1991.

Chicago manager Ozzie Guillen signaled for the wrong reliever in the eighth. He wanted left-hander Damaso Marte to face Travis Hafner, but first base umpire Joe West thought Guillen signaled with his right hand, and walked to the bullpen to escort right-hander Cliff Politte to the mound instead.

After Guillen argued briefly with West, Politte got Hafner to pop up and, after Victor Martinez singled, got Casey Blake to hit into a double play. Shingo Takatsu worked the ninth for his seventh save in seven attempts.

The sweep helped the White Sox keep pace with first-place Minnesota. The Twins are a half-game up on Chicago and six on Cleveland. The Sox return home for a weekend series against Detroit before three games against the Twins starting Monday.

AL Roundup

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"We came in here and did what we're supposed to do," Everett said. "If that made a statement — fine."

Yankees 1, Blue Jays 0: Ruben Sierra homered with two outs in the ninth, only the second time the Yankees won 1-0 with a game-ending homer.

Orlando Hernandez shut down Toronto for seven innings before Sierra's first game-winning homer since April 1989 — a blast over the center-field fence at Yankee Stadium.

Orioles 8-0, Red Sox 3-4: Tim Wakefield pitched seven shutout innings five days after a line drive hit his pitching shoulder and Boston beat Baltimore for a split in a day-night doubleheader at Fenway Park.

The Orioles won the opener behind Melvin Mora's two homers and four RBIs and the pitching of Rodrigo Lopez.

Mariners 4, Athletics 2: Bret Boone homered for the second night in a row, a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the eighth inning. Host Seattle has won four of five.

Boone's shot off Mark Redman gave the left-hander his second complete-game loss of the season. Redman (6-8) allowed three earned runs on seven hits and three walks.

Eddie Guardado pitched the ninth for his 18th save in 23 opportunities.

Royals 13, Tigers 7: Mike Sweeney hit a grand slam and a three-run homer. Ken Harvey also connected for the Royals, who snapped a three-game losing streak and won for just the 13th time in 44 road games this season. Sweeney matched a club record with seven RBIs.

Detroit's All-Star shortstop, Carlos Guillen, left the game after the fourth inning due to stiffness in his back. He is listed as day to day.

Twins 7, Devil Rays 5: Michael Cuddyer hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning and Nick Punto had a grand slam at the Metrodome.

Rocco Baldelli tied it 5-5 with his first career grand slam for the Devil Rays, who have lost 12 of 17 since moving a season-high two games over .500 on July 3.

Joe Nathan pitched the ninth for his 27th save.

Angels 11, Rangers 1: Bartolo Colon (8-8) allowed just



Boston's David McCarty upends Baltimore second baseman Brian Roberts too late to prevent a double play in the fourth inning of Thursday night's game at Fenway Park.

three singles in seven innings against host Texas' powerful lineup.

Rangers starter Ricardo Rodriguez (3-1), who entered the game with a string of 15½ consecutive scoreless innings, had his right elbow broken when he was struck by Quinlan's liner in the fourth.

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Ramstein team falls short in championships game

BY RUSTY BRYAN

Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — Frank Van Heijst allowed just four hits over five innings Friday as the Netherlands defeated the Ramstein Americans 8-3 in the championship game of Little League Baseball's European, Middle East and African Regional tournament.

The victory ended the Dutch team of 16- to 19-year-olds to the Big League World Series in Easley, S.C., which runs from July 30 to Aug. 7.

Ramstein's only loss of the tour-

Netherlands headed to Big League World Series

nament left coach Ken Linger pondering what might have been.

"We picked a bad day to have a bad game," said Linger, whose team defeated the Netherlands 8-2 earlier in the tournament. "They played loose and we played tight."

The Dutch team set the tone in the first inning.

Van Heijst needed only five pitches in the top of the first to retire the side. The key, according to catcher Alvaro Maduro, was Van Heijst's split-finger fastball.

"He shows the batter the split-finger grip outside his glove before every pitch," Maduro said, "then he changes the grip in his glove or keeps it during the wind-up."

Maduro and shortstop This Brand gave Van Heijst early run support, hitting first-inning home runs to give the Netherlands a 3-0 lead.

Despite the rocky start, Linger wasn't concerned.

"Early runs don't usually matter in these games," he said.

"We've come back all year. Today, we just couldn't score. We'd load the bases and not score any more."

The Americans left two runners stranded in the fourth and fifth innings and ended the game with the bases loaded in the seventh.

Daan de Jong, who relieved Van Heijst in the sixth, got out of the late-inning game by coaxing a pop-up out of Ramstein cleanup hitter Dustin Linger with one out.

"There was a lot of pressure fac-

ing Linger," de Jong said. Dustin Linger had homered four times in Ramstein's four previous games this week.

"I threw him a slider outside," de Jong said. "I wanted to make sure he couldn't hit it out of the field. I kept it outside so he'd either pop it up or hit a ground ball. It was really exciting."

De Jong struck out catcher Logan Begeman to end the game.

Dustin Linger, who was 2-for-3 at the plate, allowed eight hits and struck out eight in six innings of work.

E-mail Rusty Bryan at: bryan@mail.strips.esd.mil

Report: Jones accused of using steroids in '00

The Associated Press

The ex-husband of three-time Olympic champion Marion Jones told federal investigators that she used several banned performance-enhancing drugs during the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, two newspapers reported.

Jones won an unprecedented five track medals during those Games, three of them gold. Her lawyer, Joseph Burton, accused C.J. Hunter of lying out of bitterness over the breakup of the couple's marriage.

Hunter told Internal Revenue Service investigators that he injected his then-wife with banned substances and saw Jones inject herself with the drugs at their home in Australia, the San Francisco Chronicle said.

The San Jose Mercury News also reported Hunter's comments, citing anonymous sources. Human growth hormone, the steroid THG, insulin and the endurance-boosting drug EPO were among the substances Hunter alleged Jones used.

Angela DeMont, Hunter's lead lawyer, told the Mercury News, "It is totally inappropriate for me or any attorney to publicly comment about the facts of a pending case or pending investigation. That being said, pending a serious crime and those who commit that crime should be punished accordingly."

Hunter, the 1999 world shot put champion, tested positive for ste-

Sports briefs

roids four times in 2000 — when he was married to Jones.

During a packed news conference in Sydney in which Hunter broke down in tears and tried to explain away his positive tests, Victor Conte sat by his side and commented as his "nutritionist."

Conte founded the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative and is one of four people charged with distributing steroids through the laboratory. Jones and boyfriend Tim Montgomery — world record holder in the 100-meter dash — were among those who testified before the grand jury that indicted the four.

Jones has asked that her grand jury testimony be made public, and has provided a lie detector test result as evidence she told the truth when she adamantly denied using banned substances.

Montgomery, however, is among four track athletes accused by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency of drug violations, even though they have not tested positive. The accusations are based on evidence gathered by the USADA as a result of the BALCO probe. USADA is seeking to ban all four from the sport for life.

Last month, the Chronicle published what it said was Montgomery's grand jury testimony in which he admitted using steroids. Jones remains under investiga-



C.J. Hunter, right, tested positive for steroids in 2000 while he was married to Marion Jones, left.

tion by BALCO, although she has not been formally accused of any offense.

Travis Tygart, director of legal affairs for the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, would not comment specifically on Jones' case.

Cycling union adopts new anti-doping rules

AIGLE, Switzerland — The International Cycling Union has adopted its new anti-doping rules, but has yet to sign the World Anti-Doping Code that is mandatory for inclusion in the Athens Olympics.

UCI President Hein Verbruggen opposes some of the code, but had said his federation will sign before the Summer Games.

A statement from the UCI on Friday said the body took into account the code. UCI's management committee adopted its new code following two days of meetings in Salzburg, Austria.

The new anti-doping rules will come into force Aug. 13, the day the Olympics start.

Rocky: Chacon only the latest to struggle in Mile High City

ROCKY, FROM BACK PAGE

Darren Holmes was the first to test the task in 1993, when the Rockies still played at Mile High Stadium. He had a respectable 25 saves in Colorado's inaugural season, but his ERA rose to 6.35 the next year and he was replaced by Bruce Ruffin before the season was over.

Ruffin closed the season with 16 saves, then shared duties in Colorado's first season at Coors Field 1995. That turned out to be Colorado's best year, with three players saving at least 10 games in the Rockies' only playoff appearance.

Ruffin had 24 saves the following season, but that proved to be the last of his run. He was 0-2 with a 5.32 ERA in 1997 and was replaced by Jerry Dipoto.

Dipoto had 19 saves in 1998, then was replaced by Dave Veres in the next season. Veres had an ERA rose to 4.26. Veres set a team record with 31 saves in 1999, but struggled late and was traded away at the end of the year.

Jose Jimenez had the longest run of success in the Mile High City, but the Coors curse finally caught up to him, too.

A year after pitching a no-hitter in his rookie season with St. Louis, Jimenez had 24 saves in 2000, 17 in 2001 and set a team record with 41 in 2002.

Jimenez started off well last season before control problems took away his confidence and led the Rockies to replace him midway through. Jimenez was released before the season.

And now Chacon is struggling.

"You come in with a one-run lead, make a good pitch and a guy can muscle it out of the ballpark," Herges said. "I guess you kind of have to like the way he do in an arbitration case." He had these numbers, but they were in Coors Field and were the equivalent to this. "

For Chacon, it has been all or nothing.

When he's hitting his spots with his fastball, Chacon is as good as they come, with the kind of stuff Herges calls "absolutely electric." Chacon proved that when he ended the first half with nine straight saves, finishing with 20 by the All-Star break.

Problem is, Chacon's lack of command of his fastball has kept him from staying consistent.

Chacon is blessed with a fastball that has a lot of natural movement, but at times takes away more than he expects. As a starter, Chacon would have and inning or two to figure out where the ball was going and make adjustments. He doesn't have that luxury with the game on the line and it's led to plenty of anguish for Chacon, the Rockies and their fans.

"I've hit rock bottom this season," Chacon said. "The thing on the line and it's broken. It took me a while to figure out how to bounce back and what I need to do. Any time you go out and blow some saves, it makes you tougher mentally. That's the life of a closer."

Earnhardt Jr. will use Truex Jr. as relief driver in Siemens 300

The Associated Press

LOUDON, N.H. — Dale Earnhardt Jr. chose to sit out Friday at New Hampshire International Speedway, taking another day to allow his legs and face to heal while allowing rookie Martin Truex Jr. to qualify his car.

Earnhardt plans to get into his Chevrolet for practice on Saturday and will start Sunday's Siemens 300 to earn the NASCAR Nextel Cup driver standings points before giving up the driver's seat to Truex.

Racing briefs

who looked uncomfortable with a muzzle bandage wrapped tightly around his neck during a news conference Friday.

"Unfortunately, after the wreck last weekend, I won't be able to run the entire race," he said. "I'm really disappointed. I've never been in this situation before. But I'm glad that Martin's going to be

able to do it. He's a good driver and a good friend."

Truex, who leads the Busch Series driver standings in a car co-owned by Earnhardt and his stepmother, Teresa Earnhardt, will be racing in his first Cup event when he relieves his boss on Sunday.

Earnhardt received second-degree burns on the inside of his legs and on his neck and chin when he crashed last Sunday during a warmup for an American Le Mans Series sports car race in Sonoma, Calif.

The son of the late Dale Earnhardt was suddenly surrounded by a ball of flame but managed to unhook his belts and scramble from the car before safety workers arrived.

Craven will leave seat at end of season

LOUDON, N.H. — Ricky Craven will leave PPI Motorsports at the end of the Nextel Cup season.

Craven and team owner Cal Wells issued a joint statement Friday, saying the split was in "their

mutual best interest."

"Both Cal and Ricky want to see the best for each other and remain focused on the second half of this season," the statement said.

Craven, in his fourth season with Wells' team, is 31st in the driver standings. In the first 18 races this season, Craven has not started a race higher than 17th and hasn't finished better than 10th.

Both of Craven's NASCAR Nextel Cup victories came in PPI Motorsports cars.

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RB George reportedly join Cowboys

BY JAIME ARON

The Associated Press

IRVING, Texas — Eddie George agreed to a contract with the Dallas Cowboys on Friday, just two days after being released by the Tennessee Titans, according to a team source.

George's deal was pending a physical, the source told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

George signed a one-year deal that includes an immediate \$1.5 million bonus,

which was about what the Titans wanted to pay him for the entire season. Add his base salary and easily reachable incentives and he could make upward of \$4.5 million, more than he would have earned under his previous deal with Tennessee.

George was cut Wednesday, at his request, after he rejected Tennessee's final bid. He left the Titans after eight seasons and more than 10,000 yards.

George's only free-agent visit was to Dallas. Negotiations moved quickly because

the Cowboys had plenty of room under the salary cap, and a week before opening training camp, they were still looking for a veteran running back to ease the burden on Julius Jones, a second-round pick from Notre Dame who was expected to be the starter.

Although George has never missed a game in his 128-game career, he's been slowed by injuries lately for someone who's averaged 21.4 carries per game. He turns 31 in September.

The pounding has reduced his effectiveness. After averaging 3.9 yards per carry

his first five seasons, his average has dipped to 3.2 over the past three seasons. It was 3.3 last year, when he gained 1,031 yards and topped the 10,000-yard mark for his career.

George's 2003 numbers are similar to what Troy Hambrick produced last season when he underwhelmingly replaced Emmitt Smith. Hambrick has since been released.

The difference is that the Cowboys believe George can be valuable if used properly, especially in the lead yards and short-yardage situations. He scored 12 touchdowns two seasons ago.

Sorenstam poised to win Evian Masters title

The Associated Press

EVIAN, France — Annika Sorenstam grabbed a three-shot lead in the \$2.5 million Evian Masters tournament with an impressive 7-under 65 during a storm-delayed third round on Friday.

In a hallmark display of cool, controlled play, the world's No. 1 female golfer made seven birdies in a bogey-free round to move in front of second-round leader Karen Stupples, who is in second place.

Sorenstam drove into the left rough on the par-5 18th and only advanced the ball 74 yards on her second shot. With 170 yards to the pin, the 33-year-old Swede deposited a 7-iron 20 inches from the hole. Sorenstam is 16-under-par through 54 holes. Stupples slipped to second with a 69. Mexico's Lorena Ochoa was in third, four shots back, after carding a 67, and Australia's Wendy Poonan shot 69 to finish in fourth, five behind Sorenstam.

Sorenstam is aiming for her fifth victory. She has led 54 times going into the final round and won 35 times. She has only finished outside the top-three twice.

The 31-year-old Swede knows what to expect playing with Sorenstam on Saturday. She has played with her three times this year and each time the Swede had a 65.

Michelle Wie, plagued by putting problems that also resulted in five three-putts on Thursday, had four bogeys in five holes on the front nine and finished with a

Golf roundup

4-over 76.

Eight tied for lead in Milwaukee

MILWAUKEE —

Only one other time has a PGA Tour leader board been this crowded after an opening round.

Eight golfers shot 5-under 65s Thursday and were tied for the lead in the U.S. Bank Championship, formerly known as the Greater Milwaukee Open.

Ten golfers were one shot back. Danny Briggs was tied for first with Todd Fischer, Bo Van Pelt, Brett Quigley, Patrick Sheehan, Brian Kortan, Robert Gamez and Olin Browne.

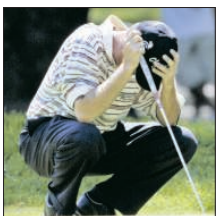
The Honda Classic in 2000 had the only other eight-way tie for first after one round, according to the PGA Tour, which began keeping such statistics in 1970.

Among those to shoot 66 were Paul Azinger, who called this "a mini-USA Open," Brown Deer Park isn't the pushover it used to be, even though 62 players broke par and another two dozen matched it.

The firm greens and deep rough have put some teeth into the famously mild par-70 layout that measures 6,759 yards, one of the shortest on the PGA Tour.

O'Hern, Lonard top field in Irish Open

DROGHEDA, Ireland — Nick O'Hern and Peter Lonard shot 8-under 64 and



Things weren't so bad Thursday for Wisconsin native Jerry Kelly. He shot 66 and trailed the leaders by one after the first round of the U.S. Bank Championship.

shared the first-round lead in the Irish Open at Ballyvaughan.

Stephen Gallacher, Simon Wakefield and Brett Rumford shot 66. Darren Clarke and Padraig Harrington each had a 70.

Pooley shares lead in Sr. British Open

PORTRUSH, Northern Ireland — Don Pooley shot 72 and shared the 36-hole lead of the Senior British Open on Friday with three others.

Pooley is tied at 3-under 141 with Ireland's Zimbabwe-born Mark McNulty, Peter Oakley and England's Carl Mason, who lost in a playoff to Tom Watson in last year's championship at Turnberry.

Tom Kite, Scotland's Bill Longmuir and England's Mark James are one shot behind the leaders.

Summit meeting on rules is goal-oriented

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Once NHL players get back on the ice, they might find a game that empowers offense.

That was the objective of most on a blue-ribbon panel comprised of hockey royalty, from Mario Lemieux to Scott Bowman. That group got together Thursday to discuss how to create more flow and offense.

Ideas were exchanged and debated as part of a process NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman hopes will lead to rules changes that could go into effect after a new labor agreement is reached.

The talks were praised by players, NHL officials, coaches, general managers and executives, who made up the group.

"Everybody on the panel really cares about the game of hockey and is trying to make it more exciting and have more scoring," said Lemieux, the player-owner of the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Toronto forward Gary Roberts, and Nashville forward Scott Walker were

joined by referee Stephen Walkom, several team presidents, Islanders owner Charles Wang, six general managers, and Bowman — the winningest coach in league history.

"I've been involved in a lot of meetings in my life, but I've never been in a meeting that had the composition this meeting did," NHL hockey operations director Colin Campbell said.

Bettman made it clear that Thursday's discussions, which lasted about six hours, were strictly to address on-ice issues and not the problems off it — despite the presence of union head Bob Goodenow.

Following up on recommended rules changes proposed by general managers in February, this panel of 25 discussed the state of the game.

The GMs suggested radical ideas that were met with varying levels of resistance. Most came from goaltenders, who didn't like hearing that the width of their pads could shrink 2 inches, down to 10, and that they would not be allowed to go behind the net to play the puck — a skill in which Brodeur excels.

"My view will never change in that. I

should be able to do whatever I want," he said.

Other ideas suggested by GMs were moving the nets back 3 feet toward the end boards to 10 feet. They also supported bringing back the tag-up offside rule, which would lead to fewer whistles.

Some concepts, such as wider blue lines and giving three points for a regulation victory will be tested in the AHL before they are considered for the NHL.

Bertuzzi's assault case pushed back

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Todd Bertuzzi's assault case was pushed back to Aug. 10 to give his lawyers more time to examine police evidence disclosed by prosecutors.

The case was supposed to resume Thursday, but prosecution and defense lawyers appeared in court to ask for more time. Bertuzzi's lawyer, Len Doud, said there are no difficulties in the process — just a lot of information from the police investigation to examine.

Bertuzzi, who plays for the Vancouver Canucks, was charged with assaulting Colorado's Steve Moore during a game.

Bucs, top-pick Clayton reach contract terms

The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — First-round draft pick Michael Clayton agreed to terms on a contract with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Thursday.

Clayton was the 15th player selected in the draft and is being counted on to make an immediate impact on offense and special teams.

The 6-foot-3, 197-pounder had 182 receptions for 2,582 yards and a school-record 21 touchdowns in three years at LSU. He had 10 catches for 1,079 yards and 10 TDs in the Tigers' championship season last year.

Last season's receptions leader, Keenan McCardell, said he won't report to training camp next week unless he gets a contract extension.

Source: Texans reach terms with first-round pick Robinson

HOUSTON — The Houston Texans and cornerback Dunta Robinson have agreed to contract terms, according to a league source, meaning the team would have both of its first-round draft choices in training camp.

Robinson, considered one of the top coverage men in the draft after a stellar career at South Carolina, was so highly regarded by the Texans that they moved veteran cornerback Marcus Coleman to free safety.

Farrior gets five-year deal with Steelers

PITTSBURGH — Steelers linebacker James Farrior reaches a five-year, \$16.4 million deal with the team Thursday.

Farrior was the Steelers' leading tackler in 2003 with 127.

McNair avoids DUI conviction

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Prosecutors seeking a DUI conviction against Tennessee Titans quarterback Steve McNair received a blow Thursday when a judge ruled the arresting officer didn't have "sufficient basis" to pull him over.

Davidson County Criminal Court Judge Cheryl Blackburn granted McNair's request to suppress all evidence related to the May 2003 stop, saying officers didn't have observations did not provide "specific and articulable facts" that the defendant was driving under the influence.

McNair was arrested in downtown Nashville. His blood alcohol content registered at 0.18 percent, according to a police report.

Tennessee signs RB Smith

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Tennessee Titans signed running back Antwan Smith, New England's leading rusher the past three seasons.

Smith, 32, agreed Thursday to take substantially less than the \$2.5 million base salary demanded by Georgia Tech lead the Patriots with 642 yards rushing last season.

NHL briefs

Armstrong unsure if he'll ride in 2005 Tour de France

BY JEROME PUGMIRE
The Associated Press

ANNEMASSE, France — Lance Armstrong will race again in the Tour de France, although maybe not next year.

The Texan is on the verge of becoming the only rider to win the showcase event six straight times. He would like to focus on other races but is not prepared to turn his back on the 101-year-old Tour for good.

"I would do it. I'm not saying I'd never do it again," he said after Friday's 18th stage. "I'll do it again before I stop. It's a special race. It's everything. You can't have this intensity in any other event."

Asked if he would skip next year's Tour to focus on other events, Armstrong said: "It's too hard to say."

"I haven't made a schedule yet," he added. "It's fair to say there's still a lot of things I'd like to do in cycling, like the classics and the hour record, that require a different type of focus."

The key factor would appear to hinge on sponsor demands. Before the Tour, his team signed a three-year, multimillion-dollar sponsorship deal with the Discovery Channel, which will replace U.S. Postal Service.

"I have to discuss it with them," he said. "If they give me the green light on something like



Lance Armstrong said he has not decided about next year's Tour de France, despite a published report that said this would be his last tour.

that (riding in the classics and the hour record) I might do it. But if they say 'Lance, we'd like you to do the Tour' I understand that, too."

The Tour's top three officials said they had not discussed Armstrong's 2005 plans with the five-time champion.

"He is doubtless the greatest rider ever in the Tour de France. He is proving that," said Patrice Clerc, president of the Tour.

"Now does he want a seventh, or an eighth? I have no idea."

The New York Times reported Friday that this was the last time Armstrong would compete in the race. A high-ranking official among race organizers, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told the paper Armstrong already has informed the Tour of his plans.

According to the paper, the official said Armstrong saw no point

in trying for a seventh title and that this was a gesture of respect for the four cyclists who have won five times.

Before the Tour, Armstrong had said he would race in the Tour in 2005. He also said this month he would be competing in 2005, although he didn't specify whether that would include the Tour.

A call to Discovery's office in Silver Spring, Md., was not immediately returned.

Former cyclist Johan Bruyneel, manager of Armstrong's team and a friend and mentor, feels the Texan may find the Tour too hard to resist.

"We haven't spoken about the program either with him or the other riders," Bruyneel told French television. "Personally, I think that for Lance it would be very hard for him to motivate himself without the Tour de France."

Dan Osirow, a spokesman for Tailwind Sports, which owns the team, said the team's schedule probably would be drawn up in December.

"To say he's out right now is way too speculative. He is going to race a full season. We just can't say what events they will be," he said.

"He's clearly insatiable. This race means more to him than anything in sport," Osirow added.

Armstrong has outlasted his ri-

vals as the race heads toward the finish Sunday in Paris. He has won three consecutive stages for the first time and a total of four in this Tour, matching his best showing since he first won the Tour in 1999.

Armstrong has long been criticized for concentrating almost solely on the Tour de France, neglecting classic races that form an important part of cycling tradition. He is now considering some classics and wants to go for the hour record, in which cyclists ride as far as possible in one hour on a circuit.

"I think at some point, I have to start to look at other races in cycling. There's still a lot of things I want to do in cycling," Armstrong said.

Armstrong, the father of three children, also has acknowledged that the demands of training for the Tour have taken him away from his family.

"I'm more mentally than physically (tired)," he said Friday. "Mentally I'm ready to go home and see my kids and relax."

He said two weeks ago he would skip the Athens Olympics because he wanted to be reunited with his children. He has been accompanied in this year's Tour by rock singer Sheryl Crow, following a divorce last year from his wife, Kristin.

Associated Press Writer John Leicester contributed to this report.

Stage 18 results on Page 28.

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SPORTS

Closing at Coors
rocky for ChaconConverted starter's ERA goes
up in thin air at Denver stadiumBY JOHN MARSHALL
The Associated Press

A leadoff walk, a couple of boos. A single, and a few more fans join in. The tying run crosses the plate and the jeers turn into a chorus.

By the time it's over, it seems every fan is letting Colorado closer Shawn Chacon have it after blowing yet another save chance.

It's hard to blame Chacon too much. After all, he's trying to adjust on the fly to an awfully rough role: closing out games at Coors Field.

"Throwing in the thin air and with everything Coors Field has to offer, I would definitely say it's the toughest job in baseball besides late-inning pinch-hit guys," San Francisco Giants closer Matt Herges said. "It's got to be in the same ballpark."

With plenty of movement on his fastball, a good breaking ball and a never-back-down attitude, Chacon seemed a natural when the Rockies went looking for a closer in the offseason.

The right-hander was an All-Star as a starter last year, but he was easily the best option for a team that didn't have the money to get a big-name closer and not much to choose from within the organization.

It hasn't been as smooth as Chacon or the sagging Rockies would have liked.

Struggling with his command — 31 walks in 41½ innings — and the urgency that comes with pitching in tight games, Chacon has been very good or very bad.

Chacon has blown seven of 28 chances

and is in line to become the first pitcher in major league history to save 20 games and have an ERA over 7.00. He had a 7.40 ERA heading into the weekend.

Chacon has allowed at least two runs in nine of his 42 appearances — all an inning or less — and has given up 49 hits, including nine homers.

Even his saves have been adventures. He closed out a 6-5 victory over Los Angeles on Wednesday, but only after giving up a two-out solo homer to Shawn Green in the ninth inning.

"We didn't expect it to be the roller coaster ride that it's been," Rockies manager Clint Hurdle said.

The worst of it came right after the All-Star break.

Facing San Francisco on July 16, Chacon seemingly had no idea where the ball was going. Most of his pitches were nowhere near where the catcher was set up and sailing off in all directions.

Chacon allowed four runs in the ninth inning on just one hit, giving up two walks, and throwing a wild pitch that led to two runs in the Giants' 7-5 victory.

"I had nothing," Chacon said. "Whatever the reason was, I didn't have command of my fastball and wasn't able to get the job done, basically."

Chacon isn't the only one who's had trouble at Coors Field.

In 11 years since entering the league as an expansion team, the Rockies have yet to find anyone to consistently close out games. A few have had moderate success, but the thin air always catches up to them.

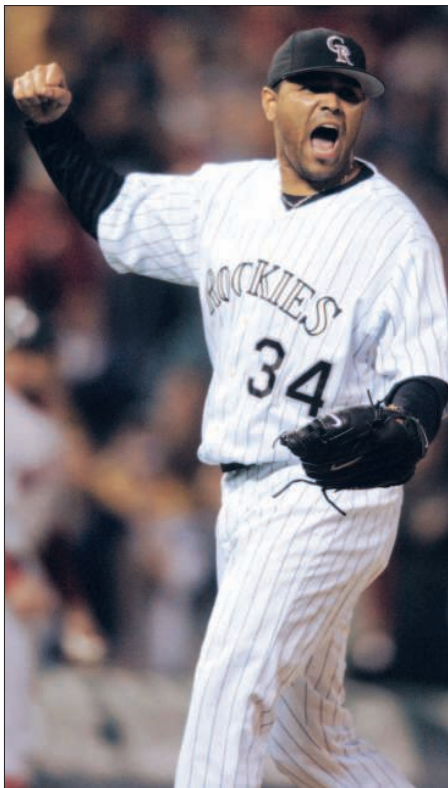
*"You come in with
a one-run lead,
make a good pitch
and a guy can
muscle it out
of the ballpark."*

Matt Herges
San Francisco Giants closer

SEE ROCKY ON PAGE 28



Injured Earnhardt Jr. will use
replacement driver on Sunday,
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Colorado Rockies reliever Shawn Chacon could become the first to save 20 games in a season and have an ERA above 7.00. Chacon's ERA was 7.40 headed into the weekend.

Two days
after release
from Titans,
RB George agrees
to deal with Dallas

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Reports:
Ex-husband says
Marion Jones
used steroids
in 2000

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Armstrong
might skip 2005
Tour de France
in favor of family,
other pursuits
in cycling

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White Sox shut down Indians, keep Minnesota in sight Page 27